

Submitted by Brian Johnson

Media items regarding Connecticut State University System personnel issues

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Far Too Many Students See College As Out Of ReachBy JOHN H. MOTLEY
October 4, 2008

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In Connecticut each year, there are more than 10,000 well-qualified, thoroughly prepared students who graduate from high school but do not go on to attend college. Their reasons vary, but a recent study suggests that many of them could be in college, if only they knew more about how to pursue a college education.

For them, and for our state, their absence from college classrooms is an opportunity cost of the first order — and a situation in dire need of a solution.

College-qualified students who choose not to attend college don't know enough about the cost of college, the amount and types of financial aid available, how to enroll and the personal economic benefit of getting a degree, according to a study by the Institute for Higher Education Policy.

Anyone who has attempted to navigate the financial aid maze understands the difficulty. For students who face additional obstacles, such as language barriers or low income, or not having parents or close relatives who have gone through the process, college is often wrongly perceived as an unattainable goal. It quickly falls from the list of post-graduation options.

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Just think of the difference that thousands of academically qualified students could make in our state if they elected to advance their education beyond high school, graduated and then entered our workplaces fully prepared.

As a state, we must work diligently and collaboratively across all levels of the education system to make college a real possibility for these students. Perception can become reality. If we can convince them to believe that they can successfully gain admission and thrive in college, they may just seize that opportunity.

The Connecticut State University System knows firsthand of the struggles facing these students. Nearly half of the students at CSUS — 49 percent — are the first in their families to attend college. That surprising number reflects remarkable dedication, with many students surmounting difficulties such as language, economic status or a family situation.

Increasingly, it is upon the shoulders of these students that Connecticut's future rests. A landmark study of the changing demographics of this region, New England 2020, found that by 2020 more than a quarter of Connecticut's working-age population will be made up of members of minority groups, and nearly half of the 25- to 29-year-olds in Connecticut will be minorities.

We simply cannot afford to let higher education slip away from students who could make the grade if given the chance. As recently as 2000, according to a study for Achieve Inc., two-thirds of Americans believed that there were many ways to succeed without going to college. By 2007, that number had dropped to less than half.

One additional trend was cited in the Institute for Higher Education Policy data — only 15 percent of college-qualified students who did not enroll in college even applied to college; a mere 12 percent applied for financial aid; and only 10 percent took the SAT.

Those numbers suggest to researchers that the decision not to apply to college was often made long before high school graduation. That underscores the importance of efforts to provide middle school students with crucial information about the college readiness process.

The sooner students believe that college is a real possibility, the less likely it becomes that college-qualified graduating seniors will turn away from post-secondary education.

Awareness of the dramatically increased earning power provided by each year of higher education, the study suggests, can be an important factor in deciding whether to apply to college. Recognizing connections between college education and the job market is another. The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that jobs requiring higher education will grow by 22 percent between 2002 and 2012 — nearly double the rate of non-college jobs.

CSUS is committed to working collaboratively to respond to barriers real and perceived, and replacing them with paths of genuine possibility. In the process, we hope to lay the groundwork for realizing academic potential that will make a difference in the lives of these promising students and our great state.

•John H. Motley of Hartford is a partner in MotleyBeup, a member of the board of trustees for the

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CT OPINION

GARY M. CRAKES

CSUS Chief's Bonus Appalls

When the next round of budget cuts occurs, how can he request a sense of unity of purpose? reduced by way of employee furloughs. Apparently this sacrifice applied to all but Carter. Paying the so-called retention award in three annual installments serves to dramatically increase its size beyond the \$82,500. Carter

has a defined benefit pension plan from the state. Delaying the retention award ensures that the payments will factor into Carter's pension base. When Carter retires, which given his age is likely in the next three to four years, he will receive a larger pension because of the retention award for the remainder of his life.

The board granted Carter a life annuity, probably in the neighborhood of \$15,000 a year, in addition to the \$82,500 payment. This life annuity will be drawn from a state employee pension fund that is one of the most underfunded public plans in the nation.

Chancellor Carter offers as a defense that he requested nothing and was not involved in any discussions. So are we to believe that student and taxpayer money is just being given out in \$300,000 to \$400,000 blocks to public employees without any request for it?

Carter's other defense is that he could have made more money if he had taken his pension and continued to be employed at 75 percent of his salary. That is true for the two-year period when he could have continued in his employment. But the differential pales in comparison to the size of payments he will receive later with additional years of service and his retention award included in his pension base. He makes no mention of his 38 percent salary increase from 2006 to the \$398,510 he was paid in 2008.

It is not clear how Carter can continue to serve as the chancellor of the university system. When the next round of budget cuts, layoffs and salary reductions occurs, how can he request a sense of unity of purpose? Even if, as the result of negative publicity, the board withdraws the award or Carter disingenuously decides to refuse it, can one really un-ring a bell?

Perhaps it is time for Carter to resign and move on to a new phase in his life — one that is not characterized by the betrayal of the public trust he has demonstrated as chancellor.

» Gary M. Crakes is a professor of economics at Southern Connecticut State University.

This month, the board of trustees of the Connecticut State University System announced a 6.3 percent increase in tuition and fees for its students. It was also revealed that more than two months ago the executive committee of the board, without public announcement, had approved an \$82,500 retention award for Chancellor David Carter, to be paid in three annual installments beginning July 1, 2010.

The board approved this award and Carter accepted it during a time of crisis with escalating tuition, a state budgetary shortfall and the elimination of jobs in the university system. Although Carter subsequently turned down the first year of his bonus, it is difficult to exaggerate the irresponsibility of this action by the board and the chancellor.

Over the past year, Carter has spoken frequently about shared sacrifice by the students, faculty and staff as tuition rose, salaries were frozen and pay was

Handcuffing Leaders

Why Give Chancellor More Power?

By STEVE LAROCCO

Debate over the recent decision by the trustees of the Connecticut State University System to give Chancellor David Carter an \$82,500 retention bonus overshadowed a larger and more dangerous vote by the board.

At the same Oct. 1 meeting in which the trustees voted Carter his whopping bonus — a decision that is apparently being revisited on all sides — they also voted to give him (and themselves) more streamlined power to fire each of the system's four university presidents. This action caps a trend of changes that began in 2006. Formerly, the presidents had one year to continue employment if judged to have performed poorly, now each will get only three months, and the main basis for the decision to fire

will be the chancellor's judgment.

Why is this change a problem? The reason is that universities are not businesses. Universities have a different social purpose and aim, which is not to make products but to produce citizens — fully democratic citizens. Ideally, a university provides students with an environment of free debate in which diverse ideas are submitted to reasoned argument. Unlike business speech, university discourse is supposed to be challenging, unruly, sometimes offensive and antagonistic. Such discourse can only thrive in a place where new thinking is

ACADEMIA, C6

» Steve Larocco is a professor of English at Southern Connecticut State University and was a recent president of Southern's chapter of the American Association of University Professors, the union for faculty.

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OPINION

Merford Courant

SUNDAY,
JANUARY 3, 2010



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CTOPINION

Academia Isn't A Business

CONTINUED FROM C1

encouraged and promoted through rigorous exchange.

Universities need presidents who value such discourse — who think, probe, challenge and engage in the vibrant public talk that makes universities places of intellectual freedom and independence.

The vote by the trustees to make CSU presidents something akin to employees at will threatens the university as a place of intellectual freedom. Like the faculty who teach, university presidents need some protection to speak openly and without fear of retaliation in order to lead an intellectually alive university.

As professors need academic freedom to question the status quo, so do presidents need

First, it will be difficult to hire vibrant, independent-minded presidents if their condition of employment is to toe the line with the chancellor.

Second, it suggests that what is important in a university is its chief administrator.

protection from political and administrative pressure in order to lead creatively.

This way of thinking about leadership is not, of course, typical in business, where leaders want everyone to be on the same page. To achieve this, businesses often think they need a top-down structure with power concentrated in the chief executive. The executive is then seen as the primary factor in the organization's success; as a consequence, compensation can become outlandish. One can see

this model in the trustee's vote for a retention bonus for Chancellor Carter and its decision to allow him to make university presidents employees at will.

The problem with this decision is twofold. First, it will be difficult to hire vibrant, independent-minded presidents if their condition of employment is to toe the line with the chancellor. Second, it suggests that what is important in a university is its chief administrator, not its faculty or students.

What we have here is a too cozy relationship between overseers and the chief executive.

Remember, the faculty in the CSU system took a pay cut of three furlough days this year and students got a tuition increase. Money defines value, and for the trustees, the people who actually do education — professors and students — both have to make fairly large economic sacrifices, while the chancellor is seen to be so valuable that he needs the equivalent pay increase of a full professor's yearly salary in order to stay.

This may make sense in terms of a business model, but in a university system that already has too few professors and economically stretched students, it seems like a mistaken priority — too much like business as usual.

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Alleged Chancellor Bonus Debated at Faculty Senate

Published: December 7, 2009 Posted in: News Tags: [senate](#)

By Matt Kiernan

The faculty senate met to discuss future course scheduling, as well as a controversial bonus that was awarded to the CSU Chancellor.

"We were told to do more with less," said President of the Senate Candace Barrington, who summarized the letter Chancellor



Candace Barrington

David Carter issued to the CSU universities in December 2008.

This opened to the discussion of how the chancellor may have been paid an estimated \$50-80,000 to refuse to take early retirement.

"I don't think this looks very good," said Barrington.

Barrington said that she found it unfair that she and other members of the faculty were never offered pay to refuse early retirement and that it could have serious ramifications for the university.

Barrington also showed a letter that was issued from the state that said a president in the CSU system may be "non-continued," or dismissed from office, if the chancellor deems it necessary. This may be acted out by the chancellor without reason or explanation.

In the letter issued last December, Carter wrote, "We must do everything we can to save every possible dollar, even while knowing that the sum total of such actions will in all likelihood be insufficient to prevent us from being touched by additional budgetary cutbacks."

The estimated bonus Carter is allegedly receiving brought questions to the ethics of him asking those in the CSU system to try their best, despite cutbacks.

The announcement of the chancellor's alleged payment bonus was received by members of the faculty with gasps and shock.

The letter also stated that the state will be facing an estimated \$2.6 billion deficit in the 2010 fiscal year, and \$3.2 billion deficit in the 2011 fiscal year.

It was announced in the meeting there are to be three open forums in the spring semester to discuss changes to class scheduling that is predicted to be ready for the spring 2011 semester.

A version of the spring 2011 time block schedule has been released on the faculty senate website under their December 7 minutes.

Larry Grasso of the University Planning and Budget Committee presented the committee's proposal for a more outlined process for faculty to make changes to their departments or programs.

The application process would include an outline of the stages of implementation, what the costs for changes would be and how it would affect other programs positively or negatively, among other things.

"We didn't want to make another hoop for people to go through," said Grasso.

Grasso added that the committee is looking to make the proposal a requirement, and that by doing so it would make future proposals have greater visibility sooner rather than later.

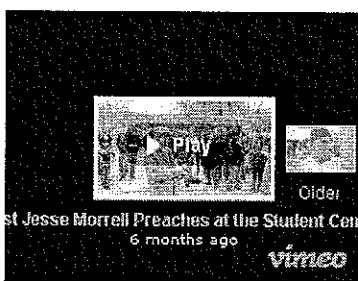
The curriculum committee is also looking to clean up their by-laws in the spring semester.

The meeting was called to a close with the deans of the CSU schools announcing their proposals with the names of students listed who are expected to graduate, as long as they meet the graduation requirements.

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College Cost Hikes Are One Thing, But A Bonus?**FEE HIKES AND A BONUS • CSUS chancellor's bonus badly timed with student cost increases**

December 13, 2009

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Trustees of the Connecticut State University System make a case for increasing tuition and fees by 6.3 percent, or \$477, on average for commuter students next year and 5.6 percent, or \$950, for residential students.

But the trustees can't defend their decision to reward CSUS Chancellor David Carter with a bonus of almost \$80,000.

The increase in costs for commuter students — the vast majority of students at Central, Eastern, Southern and Western state universities — is likely to be below the national average increase for the next academic year. This year's increase, approved in April, was also below the national average.

Trustees chairman Karl J. Krapek said CSUS would be "the best bargain in New England" even if the increase had been 10 percent for next year.

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Gov. M. Jodi Rell, who said she was "deeply disappointed" by the hikes, challenged university administrators to look deeper for savings. But the trustees said the decision was made "reluctantly" after more than 18 months of budget-cutting at the four campuses.

Their top priority, the trustees said, is to preserve the quality of CSU's academic programs and student services. Even in this economic downturn, the trustees make a plausible argument for imposing a tuition and fee increase to keep the status quo.

But the argument is less plausible for a "retention award" for the chancellor. Mr. Carter decided against taking advantage of last summer's retirement incentive program, designed by the Rell administration to cut expenses and help balance the state budget. It seems contrary to the spirit of the cost-cutting program to pay someone extra for declining to participate.

The chancellor does a great job, but he's paid nearly \$400,000 a year — a handsome reward for his public service. An award of \$80,000 on top of that — even if paid out in three portions — sends the wrong signal at a time when trustees are asking students with a lot less money to sacrifice more.

University of Connecticut President Michael Hogan recently turned down a six-figure bonus. Considering the hard times, Mr. Carter should decline his.

Do you agree? Or disagree? Be heard with a Letter to the Editor. Visit www.courant.com/letters and scroll down.

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Opinion

EDITORIAL: Costs rise, as usual, at state universities

Published: Thursday, December 24, 2009

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An \$80,000 bonus should be rescinded for chancellor of Connecticut State University System.

Tuition and fees are going up next year for the more than 36,000 students in the Connecticut State University System, including Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven. That's better than cutting services or programs, and it is hardly a surprise. Tuition increases are an annual event at colleges and universities across the country. The main quarrel students or parents should have is that the increases consistently exceed by far the inflation rate.

Tuition and fees for students who commute to the state universities will go up 6.3 percent, to \$8,043; and by 5.6 percent, to \$17,997, for students who live on campus. Compared with the costs at private colleges or even at comparable public universities, an education at a Connecticut state university is a good value.

Gov. M. Jodi Rell has criticized the increases. Rell, who is faced with a massive deficit in this year's budget, said the university system's administrators could have looked harder for savings.

The criticism is not entirely fair. It ignores the system's costing-saving measures and the state's dwindling portion of CSUS' budget revenue. Ten years ago, the state provided 48 percent of the system's operating budget. Today, it provides 40 percent.

The four state universities have 300 vacant jobs, including 195 vacancies created when faculty and staff members took a state early retirement incentive.

A salary freeze was imposed in March for nonunion workers. All workers are taking three unpaid days as furloughs. Hiring has been frozen since March 2008, and a 10 percent cut in staff has been approved by the system's board.

The governor, however, is on point about one savings the board failed to make. Recently, the system's trustees voted to give the chancellor, David Carter, an \$80,000 bonus for sticking around to do his job, rather than taking the state's early retirement offer. Carter made \$398,510 in 2008. That's more than enough. The trustees should rescind the bonus and cut the chancellor's pay. The man at the top should share the pain, not take home more cash at students' expense.

Reader Comments

The following are comments from the readers. In no way do they represent the view of nhregister.com.

ASHAMED wrote on Dec 24, 2009 7:39 AM:

" You are not the person I thought you were. You are a fraud. I am ashamed of you! What you say and do are worlds apart. Hang your head in shame Chancellor! "

Report Abuse

Old-School Mary wrote on Dec 24, 2009 8:29 AM:

" The Register and Governor Rell are spot-on: The Chancellor should give back his bonus. Otherwise, he's on par with the Wall Street bank executives. "

Report Abuse

hiring wrote on Dec 24, 2009 9:21 AM:

" Hiring at SCSU has NOT been frozen. They've hired lots of people in the last year. Plus they hired back a lot of the retiree administrators on temporary contracts until their positions are refilled. Plus those retirees got extra years toward their pension in the deal. In the long run they aren't saving the state any money. "

Report Abuse

Concerned Citizen wrote on Dec 24, 2009 10:30 AM:

" Costs? Of course the costs are ridiculous.

Someone please explain to me why there are so many Government University workers making well over 100,000.00 a year and doing it on a 35 work week. Let's not forget the pensions, Cadillac Health Care Plans, 15 Holidays, massive amounts of vacation time and sick time.

Someone please explain to me where in Private Industry such a gig exists. It doesn't. "

Report Abuse

Out of Control wrote on Dec 24, 2009 11:13 AM:

" Between what comes from our tax dollars and the students' (and their parents') wallets, the State has given the CSU Board of Trustees and the chancellor the ability to charge and SPEND whatever they want. It's not just Southern that's hiring, it's ALL the campuses AND that useless system office. Just go check out the web sites and see how many positions they're filling! Now that the pressure is on because of that disgusting bonus, how much do you want to bet they're all racing to fill the seats before the legislature gets around to throwing a net over them? "

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Incredible wrote on Jan 10, 2010 11:44 PM:

" Chancellor Cibes who Carter gave hell when he preceded him as Chancellor made less than \$ 250,000. How can one justify David Carter's salary when he was President of the smallest, poorest financially run universities, ECSU. He is a control freak that likes to intimidate his staff and the BOT. The Board and Chancellor are all Republican cronies of Jody Rell that have been appointed by her. What would you expect differently? I hope the state and BOT are ready for the influx of lawsuits and FOI's that will follow their actions in letting him screw whoever does not worship him. You know the saying goes" Payback is a b----. " "

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State Schools: The Other Bonus Culture

RETENTION PAY • A costly dollop of sugar on already sweet packages for university administrators

December 23, 2009

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The pay scale for top administrators at public universities nationwide is very good — some might say extravagant — at a time when college prices are rising faster than family income, when legislators can't make budgets balance and when many parents are losing their jobs.

Total pay for presidents of public universities is rising faster than for heads of private institutions, despite the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression.

Take David Carter, the chancellor of the Connecticut State University System. He is now paid about \$400,000 a year. His pay jumped 22.5 percent between 2006 and 2007 and 12.8 percent between 2007 and 2008.

Recently, CSUS trustees voted to give Mr. Carter an \$82,500 retention award for not taking the state's early retirement offer in June. Wisely, given the state's severe budget problems and a tuition hike of 6.3 percent for commuting students, the trustees are now reconsidering the bonus. Mr. Carter said he would decline at least the first of the three scheduled bonus installments.

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University of Connecticut President Michael Hogan, by comparison, has been more restrained in his compensation. He is being paid \$577,500 this year, 5 percent more than last year. He turned down a raise in June and two consecutive \$100,000 performance bonuses — to his credit, given that faculty and staff also gave up raises this year and tuition is likely to go up early next year. But he has collected a total of \$67,500 in retention bonuses the past two years.

Mr. Hogan heads a big, complex research institution and is worth his pay. But retention bonuses are a risky campus trend toward Wall Street-like rewards that are not popular with taxpayers right now. Boards of trustees are paying academic leaders more like corporate moguls, with everything but stock options. Pity the public university president who comes begging for a bailout.

It looks like public higher education administration, largely underwritten by the public treasury and student tuition and fees, has become a golden growth sector of the down economy.

What's your opinion? Make it count with a Letter to the Editor. Visit www.courant.com/letters and scroll down.

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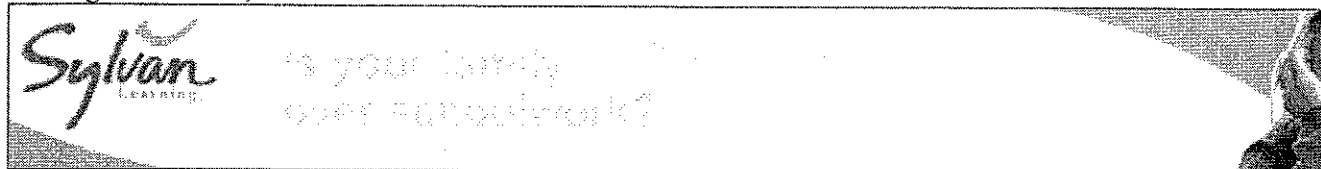
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- State University Presidents Receive Hefty Raises

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Norton to retire from SCSU

Published: Thursday, February 25, 2010

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By Mary E. O'Leary, Register Topics Editor



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NEW HAVEN — Cheryl J. Norton, president of Southern Connecticut State University, will retire at the end of May after six years on the job.

In an e-mail to the university community Thursday, Norton said she is leaving for "personal and professional reasons."

Norton, 60, was one of four finalists this year to become president of Youngstown State University in her native Ohio — a job that recently went to an inside candidate.

Norton plans to request an administrative sabbatical beginning in June to allow her to engage in research on K-12 education reform, "an area in which I have a strong personal interest," she said in the e-mail.

Southern's 10th president, Norton was the first woman to hold that position.

At Southern, Norton oversaw a \$260 million construction program, which is currently on hold as the state works out its budget problems. Since she arrived at Southern, it has had record enrollments of full-time students and its highest six-year graduation.

In her e-mail, she cited innovative programs implemented under her watch, such as the First-Year Experience Program, as making the university "truly student centered."

"I know that with your talents, your energy and your creative thinking, Southern will continue to move forward and realize its potential to become a premier institution of higher learning." Norton's e-mail said.

As for a replacement, the trustees usually appoint an interim person as they conduct a search for a new president.

Her predecessor, Michael J. Adanti, was in office for 19 years. J. Philip Smith, of Orange, the vice president for academic affairs at Southern at the time, was the interim president before Norton in 2003-04.

Southern has a student population of some 14,000 students that includes a mix of residential and commuter students.

Contact Mary E. O'Leary at 203-789-5731 or moleary@nhewhavenregister.com.

Reader Comments

The following are comments from the readers. In no way do they represent the view of nhregister.com.

SCSU Graduate wrote on Feb 25, 2010 2:47 PM:

" She didnt do much in 6 years. The school is still a mess. Financially they're horrible(check your bills SCSU students), and the "police" force is a joke. They do everything back azzwards. Good effort, Cheryl "

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Concerned Citizen wrote on Feb 25, 2010 2:59 PM:

" Show us the pension and the lifelong health care benefits we are on the hook for. "

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owl movement wrote on Feb 25, 2010 3:41 PM:

" government pensions and ghetto handouts are killing the average taxpayer. "

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neller wrote on Feb 25, 2010 4:50 PM:

" Yes, I'm sure she'll do her K-12 education reform research work from a comfy home somewhere on the coastline whicle she collects a massive amount of my hard-earned money to rest on her laurels. What did I do wrong? "

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Hummmm wrote on Feb 25, 2010 5:20 PM:

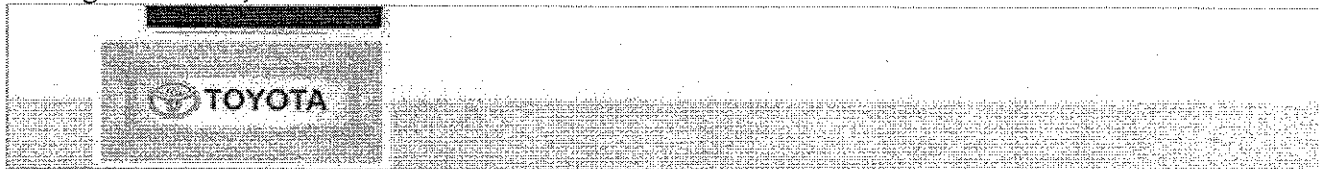
" Or did the State University System "dump" her. Hummmmm wonder only after 6 years what is the real story. "

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Stringer Bell wrote on Feb 25, 2010 5:31 PM:

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Norton leaving SCSU after 6 years at helm

Published: Friday, February 26, 2010

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By Mary E. O'Leary, Register Topics Editor

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In an e-mail to the Southern community Thursday, Norton said she is leaving for “personal and professional reasons.”

Norton, 60, was one of four finalists this year vying to become president of Youngstown State University in her native Ohio, a job that recently went to an inside candidate there.

Norton plans to request an administrative sabbatical beginning in June to allow her to engage in research on K-12 education reform, “an area in which I have a strong personal interest,” she said in her campus e-mail.

Several faculty members involved in governance at Southern, however, said it appears Norton was pushed out, after the power over the tenure of the presidents at the four-university system was transferred to Connecticut State University Chancellor David Carter this past fall.

A spokesman for Carter’s office said he only knew that Norton was resigning and had no information beyond that. A spokesman at Southern had no comment on what led to Norton’s resignation.

According to e-mails circulated among members of the Faculty Senate and others on campus, faculty at Southern were concerned about a move to concentrate power in the central office headed by Carter at what they felt was the expense of the individual universities.

Minutes from the October 2009 Executive Committee of the CSU trustees detail a policy change where a president can be “non-continued by the chancellor without cause or explanation” after he has the concurrence of the chairman of the board of trustees.

“The new power arrangement created by the Board of Trustees is clearly untenable (unless they consider CSU one university with the four campuses as simply branches,) for it undermines academia’s long-respected tradition of shared governance,” English professor Michael Shea at SCSU wrote to his colleagues in December.

Also that month, fearful that Norton was being pushed out, the Faculty Senate at SCSU sent a letter to the trustees strongly endorsing her performance, calling it “exemplary.”

Norton riled a group of faculty and alumni when she first arrived, which resulted in dozens of complaints before the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, but many of the estimated 400 full-time faculty appeared to be happy with her performance and felt Southern had progressed under her direction.

John DePonte, former president of the Faculty Senate, said he would miss Norton. "She has done a lot of wonderful things here, including a new strategic plan which she accomplished in a collaborative way," he said.

Shea said under Norton, academics have been stressed, and it has become "a higher quality institution. This is the worst time to lose her leadership."

Southern's 10th president, Norton was the first woman to hold that position.

Anthony Rescigno, president of the Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce, said Norton was a "real solid partner" with the city. "She really took that relationship seriously," he said. "She is going to be hard to replace."

At Southern, Norton oversaw a \$260 million construction program, now on hold as the state works out its budget problems. Since she arrived at Southern, it has had record enrollments of full-time students and its highest six-year graduation rate.

In her e-mail, Norton cited innovative programs implemented under her watch, such as the First-Year Experience Program, which she said helped make the university "truly student centered."

"I know that with your talents, your energy and your creative thinking, Southern will continue to move forward and realize its potential to become a premier institution of higher learning," Norton told the faculty.

As for a replacement, the trustees usually appoint an interim person as they conduct a search for a new president. Her predecessor, Michael J. Adanti of Ansonia, was in office for 19 years. J. Philip Smith, of Orange, the vice president for academic affairs at Southern at the time, was the interim president before Norton in 2003-04.

Southern has a student population of some 12,000 students that includes a mix of residential and commuter students.

Contact Mary E. O'Leary at 203-789-5731 or moleary@nhewhavenregister.com.

Reader Comments

The following are comments from the readers. In no way do they represent the view of nhregister.com.

Eagle wrote on Feb 26, 2010 7:28 AM:

" If the way she handled Coach Art Leary's situation is indicative of her management skills, then she is not only incompetent, but dangerous and disastrous. SCSU should be glad to see her go. "

Report Abuse

SCSU insider wrote on Feb 26, 2010 7:47 AM:

" Coach Leary was a lame duck, who didn't recruit or coach. He was a perfect example of how unions can protect unproductive employees. "

Report Abuse

Me wrote on Feb 26, 2010 8:26 AM:

" The Art Leary disaster was caused by the athletic administration and Coach Leary. "

Report Abuse

New Haven Register

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News

Battle named interim president of SCSU

Published: Friday, April 2, 2010

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By Mary E. O'Leary, Register Topics Editor

NEW HAVEN — A former president of universities in North Carolina and Maryland will serve as the interim head of Southern Connecticut State University.

Stanley F. Battle, one time president of Coppin State University in Baltimore and North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, will come to SCSU next month to succeed Cheryl Norton.

Norton will be on sabbatical for the next year after serving six years as president of Southern, its first female president.

Faculty at Southern have said Norton was forced out by Connecticut State University Chancellor David Carter, after he was given the power last fall to terminate a president "without cause or explanation" with the concurrence of the chairman of the board of trustees.

Battle was president of North Carolina A&T from 2007-2009 and head of Coppin State University from 2003-2007.

Battle has a bachelor's degree in sociology from Springfield College, a master's in social work from the University of Connecticut, a master's in public health from the University of Pittsburgh and a doctorate in social welfare policy from the University of Pittsburgh.

Battle was associate vice president of academic affairs at Eastern Connecticut State University from 1993-1998 and earlier in his career was a faculty member at UConn, Boston University and the University of Minnesota.

The interim appointment was made by Carter and endorsed by the executive committee of the Board of Trustees of CSUS.

"We are confident that Dr. Battle will be an effective interim leader at Southern, working closely with faculty, staff and the community in furthering the best interests of our students," said CSUS Board Chairman Karl J. Krapek.

Southern has about 12,000 students and offers 116 graduate and undergraduate programs. It is the second largest of the four universities in the Connecticut State University System.

Contact Mary O'Leary at 203-789-5731 or moleary@newhavenregister.com.

Reader Comments

The following are comments from the readers. In no way do they represent the view of nhregister.com.

tjg wrote on Apr 2, 2010 7:31 AM:

" Carter builds an empire! "

Report Abuse

martyfran wrote on Apr 2, 2010 9:15 AM:

" This is clearly a patronage appointment. It is clear that the old boys network never died, it just changed. "

Report Abuse

maybe just coincidence wrote on Apr 2, 2010 10:02 AM:

" A white woman was removed from the position by a black man, who replaced her with another black man. "

Report Abuse

jenna wrote on Apr 2, 2010 10:23 AM:

" Does anyone ever question why Battle left previous institutions? "

Report Abuse

martyfran wrote on Apr 2, 2010 11:10 AM:

" It would be interesting to know why the passed over the current provost for the position of interim president. Not that he is a perfect candidate, he certainly has his flaws, but the fact that he was passed over seems to be a signal coming from the central office. "

Report Abuse

OLD YANKEE wrote on Apr 2, 2010 12:08 PM:

" A perfect fit, having a Doctorates in welfare and in Health. HE will be living in a city known for it'd health and welfare.

Perfect time to use powers given to Carter by fools, who now have a dictator in the Chancellor.

It is not smart. The hiring and firing for any position in a college should be done by a larger group of people who share different ideas, and not by one person.

Congress is fallen in line and abdicated their powers making the President KING, What fools. "

Report Abuse

Sheridan wrote on Apr 2, 2010 2:05 PM:

" He left for "personal reasons," but the inside word is that he's a control freak and clashed with the UNC system head. "

Report Abuse

yellow dog wrote on Apr 2, 2010 5:46 PM:

" No reason for everyone to get so excited as it is just an interim appointment which will probably last for 1 year while a search is conducted for a permanent president.

At least Dr. Battle has knowledge of the CSU system from his time at Eastern which should be helpful. "

Report Abuse

Thatll be the day wrote on Apr 4, 2010 5:39 PM:

" The current provost of SCSU is a gentleman, a true scholar as well as a fair and honest man. Dr. Carter'd decision to pass him over smacks of cronyism and having witnessed Dr. Carter's vicious tirades against a colleague, I am afraid he is sending us a clone of himself. SCSu has never been a more frightening place to work...how I miss Mr. Adanti. "

Report Abuse

Unhappy Alum wrote on Apr 5, 2010 9:27 AM:

" Southern's motto has become: "you get forced out or fired, we hire". Former president, AD, Associate AD, former AD, interim Pres?, etc... "

Report Abuse

Chong wrote on Apr 6, 2010 10:37 PM:

" is that the chancellor that's like 450 pounds?? hard to believe his ego is bigger than he is "

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April 17, 2010

Dismissal of Southern Connecticut president raises concerns about chancellor's authority

By Robert A. Frahm

In a lengthy interview with New Haven Magazine late last year, Cheryl Norton talked about her goals as Southern Connecticut State University's president.

"Norton," the magazine said when it published the interview in December, "is still kicking butt and taking names."

But by then, Norton had been notified that she was being dismissed from her job, and lawyers were negotiating a separation agreement. She announced her departure in February, saying she was stepping down after nearly six years "for personal and professional reasons."

"I hereby notify you... that your appointment as President of Southern Connecticut State University will be non-continued effective Dec. 1, 2010."

Letter from Connecticut State University System Chancellor David G. Carter to SCSU President Cheryl Norton, Nov. 17, 2009

News of what was officially described as Norton's "retirement" caught the campus in New Haven by surprise. It also raised concerns about a newly-adopted dismissal process that some faculty members contend gives too much power to Connecticut State University System Chancellor David G. Carter.

A separation agreement obtained by The Mirror reveals little about what led to Norton's dismissal except to say it "is not related in any way to her work performance or for disciplinary reasons." The agreement between Norton and the CSU System says the resignation "is in their individual and collective interests" and that the agreement settles "all differences, disagreements and issues" between them.

Exactly what those differences are is not clear.

However, according to faculty members and others, Norton's departure was the culmination of tensions between her and Carter, who only weeks earlier had won a policy change that gives him authority to dismiss campus presidents "without cause or explanation" and without a vote of the system's Board of Trustees.

Earlier this month, Carter named Stanley Battle, former president of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, as SCSU's interim president. Battle and Carter were colleagues at Eastern Connecticut State University when Carter was Eastern's president in the 1990s.

Under terms of the seven-page separation agreement, Norton will be on paid leave beginning June 1. She will retain the title of president and remain on the university's payroll for a year at her annual salary of \$285,200. During that time, the university also will pay Battle an annual salary of \$280,200.

The agreement also grants travel and conference fees and other costs for a six-month sabbatical during Norton's leave but waives the usual requirement that she return to the university at the end of the sabbatical.

In their settlement, Norton and university officials agreed not to comment publicly about the separation, not to make disparaging statements about each other and not to make terms of the agreement public "unless required by law to do so." The Mirror obtained the agreement under the state's Freedom of Information Act.

Norton and Carter have refused to comment for this story.

Norton signed the separation settlement on Dec. 9. Two days later, she submitted a resignation letter to Carter.

Even before the public announcement of her departure, faculty members at the CSU system's four universities - Southern, Central, Eastern and Western - raised questions about a new policy giving Carter authority to remove campus presidents with the consent only of the chairman of the system's Board of Trustees.

"The policy unwisely and dangerously centralizes power in the Chancellor's office," Brian Johnson, president of Southern's Faculty Senate, wrote to Board of Trustees Chairman Karl Krapek. If the

board hires presidents and reviews their performance, Johnson wrote, "then why should the Chancellor alone have the power to initiate a firing and to execute it with the concurrence of only the Board Chair?"

Krapek, through a university spokesman, declined to comment for this story.

However, in a letter to Johnson he denied that the board had relinquished any authority to the chancellor. "The Chancellor and university presidents have always been and continue to be employees at will who serve at the pleasure of the Board of Trustees," Krapek wrote.

In the letter, Krapek said the revised policy - which includes an option for the board to overturn the chancellor's decision - is designed to handle dismissals discreetly without a board vote "for the noble purpose of protecting the privacy of a president in such a situation."

The board adopted the policy in October. In a letter dated Nov. 17, Carter notified Norton of his decision to end her presidency: "I hereby notify you... that your appointment as President of Southern Connecticut State University will be non-continued effective Dec. 1, 2010."

He added that the decision "is not intended to impact your career or abilities to seek another presidency where your skills would be better suited."

Norton was a finalist recently for the presidency at Youngstown State University in Ohio but did not get the job.

After her resignation, faculty leaders wrote to Krapek, urging the board to select someone from Southern's administration as interim president, but Krapek replied that "the determination of who is hired to be the Chancellor or president and whether they are retained remains the exclusive determination of the Board, with input from other appropriate parties."

The day Norton's resignation was announced, the university released statements of praise from Krapek and Carter.

"Her years leading Southern have been characterized first and foremost by a devotion to students and a commitment to furthering opportunity, while encouraging involvement in civic life," Carter said.

Krapek's statement said: "Her enthusiasm and commitment to the institution, as well as the links she nurtured with businesses and community organizations, contributed to numerous accomplishments during her years in Connecticut. We understand her decision to pursue other career opportunities, and wish her every success in the future."

University officials also cited record enrollment growth, a \$260 million construction program and the introduction of "innovative programming . . . to support student achievement" during her tenure.

At a CSU System Board of Trustees meeting this month hosted by Southern, she received standing ovations from a large crowd of faculty, students and staff.

"We thought she was a great success," said Michael Shea, an English professor and one of several people who spoke at the meeting. Among her accomplishments, he said, was hiring a strong administrative staff and a significant number of additional full-time faculty members.

Norton, 61, is the first woman to head Southern. She was appointed president in 2004 under former CSU System Chancellor William Cibes.

"She ran a tight ship here," said Gregg Crerar, Southern's director of development and vice president of a union representing administrative staff. "She wasn't as political. She was an academic."

In the recent interview in New Haven Magazine, Norton, formerly a nationally ranked marathon runner and a black belt in taekwondo, was asked how sports help women.

"I think every little girl should do some martial arts, to learn they can get hit and they will live through it," she said. "Not that women should be hit, but there is a basic understanding that I'm not so fragile. It's rough in the business world, and you have to be able to know you can withstand that mental and emotional punishment."

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Comments

Submitted by Jeff Klaus on Sat, 04/17/2010 - 12:23pm.

During her time at Southern President Norton was a force for positive change at the university and in the broader New Haven community. In addition to the major physical plant and programmatic improvements at Southern that occurred under her direction, she has been an energetic and thoughtful community and business leader. Her active service on the Regional Leadership Council and her particular focus on the "education achievement gap" in New Haven and across Connecticut has been invaluable. Cheryl Norton has been a wonderful asset to our community in so many respects. We should all hope that she won't land far away. - Jeff Klaus, Regional President of Webster Bank

Submitted by Will Hochman on Sat, 04/17/2010 - 5:17pm.

As a member of the SCSU learning community, I can only observe the changing presidency at Southern as another cost-increasing decision from CSU. There is too much news about overpaid unions in this state and not enough coverage about expensive leadership. All we know now is that Chancellor Carter's inability to work with President Norton (and/or visa versa) will cost our state "double payment" of a top salary and it will probably cost SCSU several years of potential progress. Thanks to Bob Frahm and the CT Mirror for covering this story. More "sunlight" is strongly encouraged to learn about how much CSU leadership really costs the state.

Submitted by Mikey S. on Sun, 04/18/2010 - 9:07pm.

The bottomline is that there have been a number of major problems during President Norton's tenure including a big debacle with the construction of the library addition, thefts and lack of control of equipment, pathetically low graduation rates. Now most those things are not her fault but the person at the top sometimes has to take the fall. If you compare Southern's performance with the other three CSU schools there is a big gap. Maybe the Trustees and the Board thought there needed to be a shake up to get the school moving.

Submitted by kc on Wed, 04/21/2010 - 3:05am.

According to CSU Central Office Stats, the graduation rates for all 4 CSU's (individually and collectively) is above the national average for state universities.

Submitted by Mikey S. on Thu, 04/22/2010 - 7:45pm.

Check the DHE Report -- SCSU is sporting an impressive 14% four-year graduation rate for first-time, full-time students. The large differential between their four year rate (14% and their sixth year (42%) shows that the school is wasting resources by not setting up course availability, advisement and student support to get the students out in four years. Norton inherited a tough situation but maybe the Trustees felt she hadn't made enough progress.

New Haven Register

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Opinion

EDITORIAL: Norton's firing lacks explanation

Published: Sunday, April 25, 2010

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Cheryl J. Norton, the president of Southern Connecticut State University, announced in February that she was stepping down for "personal and professional reasons."

The announcement was unexpected and a shock. After a somewhat rocky start, Norton had won praise from the faculty for improving education and from civic leaders for her community involvement.

Norton did not step down voluntarily. In fact, her future had been sealed months before. In a Nov. 17 letter, David G. Carter, chancellor of the Connecticut State University System, told Norton her appointment as president of Southern "will be non-continued effective Dec. 1, 2010," according to a report in The Connecticut Mirror (ctmirror.org).

A month before that, the board of the state university system had given Carter the authority to fire a president "without cause or explanation," if he had the approval of the board chairman.

A separation agreement Norton negotiated with the university system, which was obtained by The Connecticut Mirror, alludes only to "differences, disagreements and issues."

Norton may have been pushed out, but according to the settlement agreement, she will retain her title of president and continue collecting her \$285,200 annual salary until June 2011. In the meantime, Carter has appointed a former colleague, Stanley Battle, as interim president of Southern, at a salary of \$280,200.

Those sums may sound like small change to Carter. The chancellor earned \$389,444 in 2008, the latest figure for which information is available, and is due to collect, in addition, more than \$24,000 as a longevity bonus for staying in his job. But, the \$565,400 being spent on two presidents should be of concern to state taxpayers as much as the deliberate effort to avoid accountability at a public institution of higher learning.

Karl J. Krapek, chairman of the board of trustees of the state university system, has claimed that the board gave up the right to vote on presidents' firings, instead giving the authority to Carter, "for the noble purpose of protecting the privacy of a president in such a situation."

There is nothing noble in handing a single individual an authority that, lacking an explanation, seems capricious and arbitrary. And, there is nothing noble in ducking public accountability for decisions that are both costly and have profound effect on the educational direction of Southern or the other universities in the state system.

Reader Comments

The following are comments from the readers. In no way do they represent the view of nhregister.com.

scsu alum 95 wrote on Apr 25, 2010 2:51 PM:

" It is very surprising to here this. Southern has made noticable improvements under Norton. Question for Carter didn't Scsu suffer enough from the good old boy network before Norton was brought in. Well I guess I will stop sending my alumni checks now. "

Report Abuse

EdLeadershipcrisis wrote on Apr 25, 2010 6:01 PM:

" In a time when the board of trustees needs more substance and less politics, these jokers sold out the system to a so called "leader" that is only interested in power and trying to look good, while not caring about leading the system into a new era to bring it on a par with other state university systems like the SUNY or Cal-State systems. Bringing in an old buddy, even if qualified, to essentially double the cost of the position rather than promote an insider for a period until a new search is completed is an insult to the students and taxpayers who foot the bill. Then again, anyone who knows the people at the top can't possibly expect the search to be legit and professional. We will likely see someone's buddy take over rather than the best applicant who can meet a certain professional criteria. The CSU system needs an overhaul as power and influence on the board to get inside access to certain benefits for their respective firms/employers and other benefits are undermining academia and the legislature ought to be taking a close look at the conflicts of interest at play here. "

Report Abuse

questioncarter wrote on Apr 25, 2010 7:42 PM:

" It is somewhat mystifying that no one is really questioning Carter's unbridled abuse of power in this situation. Where are the unions? Where are the members of the Board that should know better?

What a shame. "

Report Abuse

scsu prof wrote on Apr 26, 2010 10:00 AM:

" Carter's actions have been questioned, in official communications with the university faculty, and by a huge showing of faculty, staff and students at a Board of Trustees meeting on campus 2 weeks ago. Carter was insulting and defensive to both faculty and student questioning. Why the LEGISLATURE is doing nothing about this is the question. Faculty and union representation have done their best to deal with the situation, but the fact is that Carter and Krapek have their own agenda. "

Report Abuse

concerned citizen wrote on Apr 26, 2010 10:17 AM:

" The orchestration of Carter's actions are astounding. It appears that he has complete confidence that he can take any actions he wants with impunity--and to date, this is exactly what he has done. Where is the oversight? Well, obviously not with the CSU Board of Trustees--this group has sadly abdicated all of its authority to the Chancellor under the leadership of its new Chairman, Karl Krapek. At a time when faculty positions have gone unfilled due to budgetary constraints, the extra \$280,200 for the interim president would have paid for the meager salaries of approximately 5 faculty positions. Those are the individuals who are teaching our CT students and preparing our future workforce and leaders. They are paid more poorly, on average, than our public school teachers, while the administrators enjoy the big bucks! "

Report Abuse

Truth wrote on Apr 26, 2010 10:28 PM:

" CT taxpayers, do yourself a favor and write:

Office of State Senator Mary Ann Handley
Legislative Office Building, Room 3200
Hartford, CT 06106-1591
Phone: 860.240-0441 || Fax: 860.240.0023

Let her know how you feel about this outrageous waste of resources, while jacking in-state tuition and charging students (as of next semester) for printing on campus. "

Report Abuse

Carters Nemesis wrote on Apr 28, 2010 7:25 PM:

" Carter has ruined numerous careers and is destroying the office he currently holds. He claimed to the board that the System Office would realize "a 32% reduction in staffing numbers as of July 1, 2010" but neglects to say it is because he has fired or non-renewed many hard working employees with no just cause (see board minutes: http://ct.pmhclients.com/images/uploads/CSUS_BOT_EC_Minutes_031010.pdf page 2)

He has been and is currently being sued by several former employees, including a CHRO complaint that has progressed to Stage III. He has the SUOAF Union president in his back pocket; old Eastern cronies stick together. With their collaboration, the Union president has facilitated several meetings with legislators who want nothing to do with him, but without the knowledge of even the Union's Executive Board.

I could go on, but what's the use? The Governor and legislature won't do anything. "

Report Abuse

SCSU Supporter wrote on May 8, 2010 2:25 PM:

" My question is simple: Dr. Norton was the superstar of the CSU system. Her accomplishments at SCSU and in the community were impressive and heartening. Why was SHE fired? "

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Opinion

CHRIS POWELL: Bysiewicz's blundering

Published: Sunday, April 25, 2010

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Attorney general was supposed to be a sure thing for Susan Bysiewicz -- both the Democratic nomination and the election. After 12 years as Connecticut's secretary of the state, she had stronger name recognition than every potential candidate in this year's state election except the attorney general himself, Richard Blumenthal, who finally was seeking to move up as U.S. senator. But so far Bysiewicz's candidacy has been a series of blunders.

Bysiewicz was unprepared to deal with the state law requiring the attorney general to have 10 years of experience in the "active practice" of law. The law is invalid, the state Constitution explicitly qualifying every elector of proper age for every office in the state. But rather than rely on the Constitution, Bysiewicz, a lawyer by training though one with little "active practice" behind her, dissembled and contrived about her experience. She even asserted that the secretary's job itself constitutes the active practice of law, an absurd claim that would have required prosecuting some of her non-lawyer predecessors for practicing law without a license.

Then, suing in Superior Court for a declaratory judgment in favor of her qualification for attorney general, Bysiewicz was videotaped at a deposition dissembling and making embarrassing admissions under questioning by a lawyer for the state Republican Party. In effect she made campaign commercials against herself.

For democracy's sake Connecticut has to hope that the courts will hold for once that the Constitution means what it says. If the courts don't stand up for the Constitution and democracy, Bysiewicz can hope that they conclude that the statute doesn't define "active practice" specifically enough to keep her off the ballot. For all practical purposes she is qualified by her long experience as a state legislator and secretary of the state and her brief experience as a lawyer. As always voters can decide on her judgment and character.

Nominations for Connecticut's mayor of the year should include Wallingford's William W. Dickinson Jr. for proposing, in the town budget he recently submitted to the Town Council, to reduce the school board's budget by exactly the amount the board planned to pay raises to teachers. The mayor thus clarified that school budgets aren't being cut but rather that school systems are being cannibalized by their employees.

According to the Meriden Record-Journal, the president of Wallingford's teachers union complained that the council approved the raises when it approved the union's contract two years ago. But of course economic conditions have collapsed since then, and taxpayers can't afford raises for public employees and hardly feel obliged to pay them when public employees in Connecticut on average are compensated close to 50 percent better than private-sector workers.

Proposing to reduce the school budget by the amount of the raises, Mayor Dickinson may have been inviting the teachers union to make concessions and the school board to economize on employee compensation without reducing services. School boards are way too slow to get such vital messages.

But then, of course, state government also is way too slow to get serious about economizing.

To avoid economizing, Governor Rell, a Republican, and the Democratic leaders of the General Assembly are scrambling for accounting tricks and irresponsible and expensive borrowing. The Democrats also want to impose a hidden tax on electric utility bills. The governor and the Democrats are desperate to avoid addressing the unsupportable structures and policies of state spending, though such things stare them in the face every day.

Especially ripe for review is the Connecticut State University System.

CTMirror.org's Robert A. Frahm reports that the system's Board of Trustees has authorized Chancellor David G. Carter to dismiss university presidents with only the approval of the board chairman. Frahm further reports that the chancellor recently dismissed the president of Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven, Cheryl Norton, arranged a year of paid leave for her costing \$285,000, and installed as Southern's interim president Stanley Battle, who worked with the chancellor at Eastern Connecticut State University in Willimantic. Battle will be paid \$280,000 annually.

That is, for the next year Southern will be paying \$565,000 for two presidents, the second one looking like very expensive political patronage or nepotism. There's no recession in higher education personnel in Connecticut, and there's not a peep about this yet from the governor or legislative leaders.

Chris Powell is managing editor of the Journal Inquirer in Manchester, Conn.

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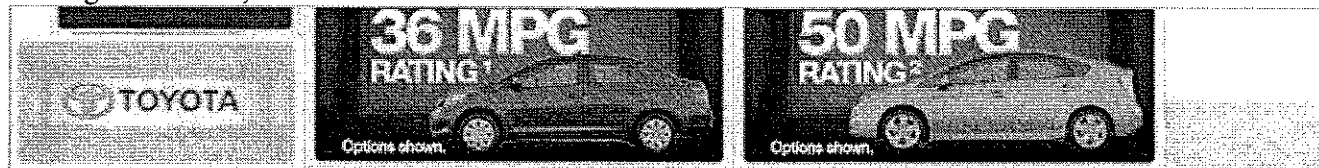
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Norton SCSU dismissal prompts call for Capitol hearing

Published: Friday, April 30, 2010

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By Mary E. O'Leary, Register Topics Editor
moleary@newhavenregister.com

The anger felt by many faculty and students at Southern Connecticut State University over the dismissal of President Cheryl Norton is spilling over to the state Capitol, with a local legislator promising a hearing on the issue.

Despite a positive review last summer, according to several sources, Norton was notified in November that after six years as president her contract was not being renewed.

That took place a month after the executive committee of the Connecticut State University Board of Trustees revised its personnel policies to allow the chancellor, with the approval of the trustees' chairman, to dismiss a president without cause.

State Rep. Peter Villano, D-Hamden, in answers to complaints from constituents at SCSU, said he shared their outrage over "Chancellor (David G.) Carter's serious abuse of power." He said he expected the inquiry by lawmakers to take place under the auspices of the Higher Education Committee in late May or early June.

Villano, in an e-mail to a faculty member at Southern, said the investigation would focus on "the reckless governance and out-of-control spending by Carter and the Connecticut State University Board of Trustees at a time when faculty members have agreed to pay cuts and students are enduring another tuition raise."

Norton's separation agreement says her performance evaluations at all times were "satisfactory" and her non-continuation "is not related in any way to her work performance or for disciplinary reasons."

The document further said it settled any unnamed disagreements between Norton and her employers, and both Norton and Carter agreed not to discuss it publicly.

Under the deal, Norton will be on sabbatical next year at her full \$285,200 salary, plus expenses, while the system will pay Stanley Battle as the interim president at a cost of \$280,200.

Bernard Kavalier, spokesman for the Connecticut University System, took issue with Villano's characterization of university spending.

"Since the downturn in the economy, the Connecticut State University System has achieved savings and cost avoidance in excess of \$40 million, including systemwide management staff reductions of 10 percent and system office personnel reductions of 32 percent," he said.

Villano said they have to address the issue in a public forum.

"There are so many people disturbed about this abrupt dismissal and the kind of immense power that the board has put in the hands of an individual," Villano said. "Many rank and file at Southern thought it was unfair and asked how we can let it stand."

Faculty, staff and students waited for hours to get a chance to express their support for Norton and their disagreement with the process, at a packed meeting of the board of trustees that was held at Southern earlier this month.

Many faculty at the meeting felt their concerns were being dismissed, as have their complaints since late last year on what they see as less shared governance with faculty.

Another policy change adopted in October allows employees hired after 2006 to be dismissed with three months notice, rather than a year, while a requirement that an interim president already have presidential experience ruled out any inside candidates from Southern assuming those duties, which faculty said would make for a smoother transition.

Karl Krapek, chairman of the trustees since July, when these changes were made, explained in a letter to Brian Johnson, president of the Faculty Senate at Southern, that the reason for the revisions on firing presidents, was to protect their privacy.

"They were for the noble purpose of protecting the privacy of a president in such a situation and to serve the mutual best interests of both the individual employee (president) and the greater university as a whole," Krapek wrote.

Johnson feels the board is relinquishing its responsibilities, even though the non-continuation policy says the executive committee must be notified and the trustees can vote to overturn the decision.

"Even if (the board) decides to contest the wishes of the chancellor and the concurrence of the board chair — the board does so at the end of the process whose importance should require its participation from the outset," he wrote. Johnson said secrecy surrounding the agreement ultimately leaves faculty and students "questioning its legitimacy."

Michael Shea, an English professor at Southern, said under the new arrangement, the chancellor only has to threaten to fire a president and "any president who wants to save his/her career and get another presidency will 'voluntarily' and quietly step down." He said the policy works against having strong, independent presidents.

Vice Chairman Richard Balducci, a member of the trustees' executive committee, Thursday said they were notified of the non-continuation, as required, at their Dec. 3 meeting.

Norton's dismissal letter was dated Nov. 17 and she signed the separation agreement Dec. 9. The full board's meeting on Dec. 10 had an agenda item about a possible management personnel issue, but by that time the deal with Norton had been struck. The minutes said the item "is no longer a matter before the board."

Contact Mary E. O'Leary at 203-789-5731.

Reader Comments

The following are comments from the readers. In no way do they represent the view of nhregister.com.

Classic Liberal wrote on Apr 30, 2010 7:24 AM:

" Most professors don't realize this yet,(or they won't admit it) but it is time that they woke up. What happened here was a reflection of the statist centralization and abusive arrogance of power that is spreading across society and coming from the corruption and condescension of the Obama administration and its tactics of the brutal repression of dissent and freedom of speech. Just wait, it will get worse. Why do they think there have been so many appointments of government "Czars" in this administration? "

Report Abuse

Classic closer look wrote on Apr 30, 2010 7:34 AM:

" or maybe not. "

Report Abuse

Stringer Bell wrote on Apr 30, 2010 7:44 AM:

" Call in Jimmy McNulty. You know Jimmy, from the Western District. Jimmy is a real police. He will get to the bottom of this corruption. Tru dat. Mos def. "

Report Abuse

Jimmy McNulty wrote on Apr 30, 2010 8:07 AM:

" Stringer: Please stop calling on me. I don't exist. There is nothing I can do as I am a figment of your imagination. "

Report Abuse

MIA wrote on Apr 30, 2010 8:21 AM:

" As an employer of SCSU for over 25 years, Dr. Cheryl Norton is the Best President we ever have. Our Campus came a long way with renovations and making your workplace feel like home. She is the only president that got to know Students and faculty/staff on a first name basis and always went out of her way to make you feel welcomed.

Leave the woman alone, let her keep her job and continue the Fantastic work she's already put into this University! "

Report Abuse

Order wrote on Apr 30, 2010 8:56 AM:

" I think Cheryle Norton had what it took to move SCSU to the 21" century. I met her a few times and she was a lady who had integrity and the 'gusts" to do the job. She was more than capable of doing the job. I agree, how can one person determine your demise. Something is'nt right with this picture. Investigation should take place by outsiders not SCSU Staff. "

Report Abuse

Marilyn Hellman wrote on Apr 30, 2010 8:58 AM:

" Where did this Stanly Battle guy come from? Is he a Carter boy?? "

Report Abuse

homunculus wrote on Apr 30, 2010 9:00 AM:

" Statist centralization

Repressed freedom of speech

Arrogance of power

Government czars

Thanks, Classic Liberal. That one little post of yours gave me four squares on my right wing nutzoid bingo card.

Report Abuse

Take note Rep. Villano wrote on Apr 30, 2010 10:00 AM:

" The scandal that the CSU system is becoming under Carter's "leadership" goes beyond this firing and buddy hiring. The fact that the ECSU successor that was chosen to replace Carter was hired through a professional search rather than his hand picked successor has made relations between his current office and his former university strained. Meanwhile, it is no coincidence that the former CSU trustees chair, Larry McHugh, is now on UCONN's board. Universities are major economic entities that have many ways of enriching people with "interests" such as high powered law firms, construction contractors and many other entities that do business with universities. There are one or more on the CSU board of trustees that have business interests that can't be enriched at CSU for obvious conflict of interest fears, but could be advanced through cozy connections at UCONN. It should be viewed very carefully in the next 3-5 years ANY relationship between current CSU board members and contracts for services at UCONN. Meanwhile, politics and making Carter look good with smoke and mirrors is the game at CSU, not work toward improving the system's academic and research standing. Rep. Villano, there is a lot more here than Dr. Norton's firing, and a comprehensive study of the CSU system should be the result of this injustice. Current and future CSU system students deserve no less, plus the economic viability of the state through needing a better CSU system depends on it too. Maybe its time to consolidate these state agencies between UCONN, CSU, Community colleges, DHE and CSDE. A small state like CT doesn't need 5 different agencies managing public education. The taxpayer deserves a break. "

Report Abuse

EX SCSU wrote on Apr 30, 2010 10:02 AM:

" Back to the good ole day's of the BOYS CLUB at SCSU! Students Suffer again!! "

Report Abuse

Chong wrote on Apr 30, 2010 10:27 AM:

" 285K, that's a lot of coin. "

Report Abuse

Stephanie G wrote on Apr 30, 2010 10:41 AM:

" ATTENTION we are in a MAJOR deficit, isn't it time for one university president covering all state universities, like Bill Curry promised he would do if elected, seems like we can't stop spending can't we "

Report Abuse

Stringer Bell wrote on Apr 30, 2010 11:09 AM:

" to Jimmy McNulty wrote on Apr 30, 2010 8:07 AM:

Jimmy McNulty is a real police. Tru dat. Mos def. "

Report Abuse

Mike wrote on Apr 30, 2010 2:50 PM:

" SCSU four-year graduation rate is 13% according to DHE. It may not be President Norton's fault but someone needs to be accountable. The Library project is a disaster and over budget by tens of millions, it may not be President Norton's fault but someone should be accountable. With poor control of equipment (Ch. 3 Report),

thefts in Bursars office and IT security breaches - it may not be President Norton's fault but someone needs to be accountable. Maybe the Board just got tired of all the problems at SCSU and wants someone to finally get the school going in the right direction. Southern considering its size and location should be the System's flagship not its embarrassment. "

Report Abuse

EMT2 wrote on Apr 30, 2010 4:14 PM:

" The 4 year graduation rate at SCSU is low because there are so many part-time non matriculated, and non-traditional students who take longer than 4 years to get a degree, or who were never seeking to obtain a degree at all, but just wanted to take a few classes. The state university system provides an opportunity for a higher education for working class students, and they do a great job of it. I got both of my degrees there, and yes, it took longer than 4 years, because I paid for it myself, without student loans. I presume that much more than 13% of the 'traditional' students graduate in 4 years. "

Report Abuse

Mike wrote on Apr 30, 2010 4:27 PM:

" The 13% the four year graduation rate is for traditional students -- full time, first time freshman. The Department of Higher Education has all the information. By the way for the Carter's bashers, ECSU's four year rate is 31% more than double SCSU. "

Report Abuse

Society for Better Reporting wrote on Apr 30, 2010 7:04 PM:

" Mary O'Leary must be writing what she's been told to write. She is certainly omitting information and documentation that she has in her possession. How many lawsuits have been filed against SCSU DIRECTLY because of Norton's actions? The Register covered the arrest of a faculty member in handcuffs at her behest -- but was mum when charges were dismissed. The Register declines to investigate why a person with fraudulent graduate degrees was allowed to be called "doctor" and to teach outside her field in CSP. Or why the university is funding the research of a known plagiarist. Or why she continued the employment of a first-year faculty member who had written complaints of anger toward women lodged against him, and has continued to be a problem. Or why the School of Business has had an interim Dean for so long. Or why the former university employee was pleading in court when he hadn't passed the bar in Connecticut.

Her reviews were not very positive. Do an FOI request on faculty and staff satisfaction surveys.

In her application to Youngstown she said she'd "worked with the Anti-Defamation League"; sure. If "worked with" means that she oversaw complaints and reached financial settlements with Jewish faculty and tried to fire a faculty member who took of for the Jewish High Holydays.

We might (might) agree that Carter is heavy handed and that there is too much centralization; the Board of Trustees is an unimpressive lot. But Cheryl Norton had her chance; she listened to the wrong people, and she buries anyone who blows the whistle. "

Report Abuse

Coolhand22 wrote on Apr 30, 2010 7:24 PM:

" My suggestion to both journalists and legislators regarding CSU - keep digging. You have barely scratched the surface. "

Report Abuse

Mr. Murrow wrote on May 1, 2010 4:50 AM:

" Homunculus, Best Post Of the Day! "

Report Abuse

HAPPILY RETIRED wrote on May 1, 2010 7:15 AM:

" As a retired SCSU faculty member who served under three different presidents at the school I must agree that this reporter did not really delve deep enough prior to writing her article-The Board is correct in saying this issue is no longer before them-but the many people on that campus can certainly let their feelings be known-not just a few who showed up at a Board meeting-I for one am happy to see SCSU try to move forward from the issues of the "Norton" era- "

Report Abuse

TAXPAYER wrote on May 2, 2010 9:13 PM:

" Stephanie said it all. Why not merge the higher education facilities statewide? Do we really need all these state university presidents, not to mention the 12 community college presidents? All total, about 3 million dollars in overinflated salaries, and that's just the presidents mind you. If you total the salaries of all the Deans statewide, no wonder the state is in huge deficit. Sadly, no one wants to address this..... "

Report Abuse

hey villano wrote on May 16, 2010 11:21 AM:

" hey villano start by looking at the h.r. dept at scsu and check out the good ole girls network and see how many friends and "consultants"they brought with them from the corrections dept, see what they have done with taxpayer and student monies other than create their own little correction dept tatics and gustapo like rules and regulations only for a certain few. ooh by the way see how many qualified for the "mandatory 120 day rehires" where are they now?? it's the old saying, "the head is bigger than the body"" Carter, Battle, Villano, they all have to go starting with a clean sweep of that dept. "

Report Abuse

ckaren wrote on May 23, 2010 1:54 PM:

" Carter's abuse of power didn't begin with Dr. Norton's dismissal nor will it end there. Having worked in an executive capacity under the chancellor, I have witnessed first hand the managerial incompetence, abuse of power, arrogant refusal to comply with government requirements and sound business practices, cronyism, and foolhardy spending - all under the deliberately averted gaze of a Board of Trustees who have lost control over their beloved money-maker Carter (remember the bond funds?) "

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April 30, 2010

Legislators to investigate Norton dismissal

By Robert A. Frahm

State lawmakers plan to investigate the recent dismissal of Southern Connecticut State University president Cheryl Norton and the disclosure that Norton will remain on the payroll along with her interim replacement.

The co-chairmen of the legislature's Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee said they will schedule a hearing where they also will ask about a policy allowing the university chancellor to dismiss presidents without a vote of the system's Board of Trustees.

Only weeks after that policy was adopted last fall, Connecticut State University System Chancellor David G. Carter notified Norton that she would be dismissed.

The CSU system announced her departure as a "retirement," but documents obtained by The Mirror indicated that Norton, 61, had been forced out and had negotiated a settlement with the CSU system.

Last month, Carter named Stanley Battle, former president of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, as SCSU's interim president. Battle and Carter were colleagues at Eastern Connecticut State University when Carter was Eastern's president in the 1990s.

Under terms of her settlement, Norton will be on paid leave beginning June 1. She will retain the title of president and remain on the university's payroll for a year at her annual salary of \$285,200. During that time, the university also will pay Battle an annual salary of \$280,200.

That arrangement caught the attention of lawmakers as the state and its public colleges and universities face a worsening budget crisis.

"You don't need to spend a half million dollars for two presidents when one would do," said state Sen. Mary Ann Handley, D-Manchester, co-chairman of the legislature's Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee.

Questions about the dismissal "have been roiling around for two, three, four weeks," she said.

Among legislators who have asked for a hearing is state Rep. Peter F. Villano, D-Hamden, who said he has received complaints about the dismissal from faculty and staff members at Southern.

"Why was it done this way?" Villano said. "What are the consequences of the firing and the questionable policy of putting that much authority in the hands of an individual who doesn't seem to be accountable to anyone?"

Faculty members at the CSU system's four universities - Southern, Central, Eastern and Western - raised questions about a new policy giving Carter authority to remove campus presidents with the consent only of the chairman of the system's Board of Trustees.

In a letter to a Faculty Senate official at Southern, Board of Trustees Chairman Karl Krapek denied that the board had relinquished authority to the chancellor. He said the revised policy - which includes an option for the board to overturn the chancellor's decision - is designed to handle dismissals discreetly without a board vote "for the noble purpose of protecting the privacy of a president in such a situation."

Senate Minority Leader John P. McKinney, R-Fairfield, and Sen. Leonard A. Fasano, R-North Haven have introduced a legislative amendment that would require the CSU chancellor to notify the legislature's higher education committee in writing of any impending decision to dismiss a university president.

"My frustration," McKinney said, "is we have a situation where we're paying two presidents' salaries at the same time we are raising tuition."

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News

Psst ... You're Fired

April 30, 2010

If a public university president is forced out, does she make a sound? In most cases she does, but apparently not in some parts of Connecticut.

A recent change to the Connecticut State University System's policies allowed a campus president's ouster to go unnoticed for months. While Cheryl Norton announced her resignation as president of Southern Connecticut State University in February, the seeds of her departure were sown in November of last year. That's when the system's chancellor, David G. Carter, employed new powers, allowing him to issue a "non-continuation" notice to Norton without a public vote of the full board.

For all intents and purposes, Norton was secretly fired, and the details of her ouster might never have come to public view if not for the Connecticut Mirror, a recently founded site that relied on public records to piece together a backstory that had not been divulged by any of the parties involved.

The documents shed light on a change of board policy approved in October -- about a month before Norton received her non-renewal notice -- that allowed Carter to quietly dismiss her. Under the new policy, a chancellor of the Connecticut State system can issue letters of non-continuation "without cause or explanation," so long as he has the "concurrence" of the board's chair. The board has its say only after the fact, when trustees have a narrow window of time to overturn the decision with a majority vote.

In the wake of Norton's "resignation," faculty and some lawmakers are questioning how a public university can oust a president without anyone ever even knowing.

"That surprised the hell out of me, too," said State Rep. Peter Villano, a Democrat from the town of Hamden. "People looked at [the new policy], they raised their eyebrows I suppose, and then everybody forgot about it. Now we're forced to take a second look, and we're all surprised and saying, 'Hold on, did this really happen? It happened on our watch. How did it come to pass?'"

Villano said he is so concerned about the lack of transparency in the process that he's pushing leaders of the House Higher Education Committee to hold hearings on the issue.

"I would hope that we would get some legislation arising out of the hearings," said Villano, who is not a member of the education committee. "The hearings will be held not just to get a clearer understanding of what happened and why it happened, but what the future course should be."

Under the non-continuation notice, Norton would have been removed effective Dec. 1, 2010. She entered into a separation agreement, however, that placed her on a year's paid leave June 1 at her annual \$285,200 salary, the *Mirror* reported.

Board Never Voted on Overturning Chancellor

Chancellor Carter was not made available for an interview Thursday, but system officials provided a statement from Karl Krapek, the board's chair. In a letter to the Southern Connecticut Faculty Senate, Krapek said the board's role was unchanged by revisions to the non-continuation policy.

"The board of trustees remains the ultimate decision maker on non-continuation," he wrote. "... [These revisions] were for the noble

purpose of protecting the privacy of a president in such a situation and to serve the mutual best interest of both the individual employee (president) and the greater university as a whole. I disagree that the Board has ceded or relinquished any authority to the Chancellor or abrogated its role in any way..."

Krapek's contention that the board still has the ultimate say on presidential firings presumably refers to a clause that allows trustees to overturn the chancellor's decision at a later date. It's notable, however, that events as they unfolded in Norton's case never allowed for that provision to be tested.

Norton's separation agreement was signed Dec. 9 -- one day before the full board was set to have its first meeting in the wake of the non-continuation notice being issued. The Dec. 10 board meeting would have been the sole opportunity for the board to overturn the chancellor's decision, and the point was moot by the time they met because of the separation agreement.

System officials would not say whether the generous provisions of Norton's separation agreement would have been available had she not signed before the board met Dec. 10.

The faculty senates of three of the system's four campuses, including Southern Connecticut, have issued resolutions objecting to or expressing concern about the changes to the non-continuation policy.

"Now two people in a back room, based on no knowledge that is public, can get rid of a president, and we saw this as very ill-advised and very dangerous," said Brian Johnson, chair of the Southern Connecticut Senate and an English professor.

"It opens itself up to the kind of arrogance and unilateral decision making that we think is particularly damaging in a higher education environment," he added. "Unlike the corporate world, we do believe in shared governance, and we don't believe in top down, back room decision making."

Eastern Connecticut's Faculty Senate recently passed a resolution calling on the board to restore its former non-continuation policy, which unambiguously left the responsibility for non-continuation of a president with the board. Bill Salka, president of the Senate, said the campus was more concerned about a potentially chilling effect on presidents than about a chancellor actually being able to override the will of the board.

"The concerns in the Senate were more with the informal fear -- the threat of the non-renewal would be enough to perhaps intimidate a president," said Salka, an associate professor of political science. "But I think if a future chancellor were to abuse the policy, there are still mechanisms where the board could overturn the decision."

Evaluations Not Public

Norton's supporters have questioned why she was removed in the first place, but they've not heard any answers from system officials. That's a big part of what is fueling frustration, several faculty members at the university said. Susan Cusato, associate professor and chair of science education and environmental studies, said that Carter was repeatedly asked at a public meeting what he thought needed to change on the campus.

"He's avoided answering the question," she said.

Trustees evaluated Norton in July, but that report has not been made public. System officials said Connecticut law forbids them from releasing the documents without Norton's expressed permission, and she hasn't granted it.

Norton's supporters herald her work establishing a first-year experience program, among other initiatives. She was not universally loved, however. Unionized faculty, for instance, frequently filed grievances against Norton early in her tenure.

Timeline

Oct. 1, 2009: Connecticut State University trustees approve new policy, allowing chancellor to issue "non-continuation" notices to presidents without full board approval. The board chair must concur, however, and trustees can later overrule by majority vote.

Nov. 17, 2009: Chancellor David G. Carter notifies Cheryl Norton, Southern Connecticut State president, that her appointment will be "non-continued" effective Dec. 1, 2010.

Dec. 3, 2009: Executive Committee of Board of Trustees meets and is informed of a "recent personnel matter which might be brought before the full board absent a resolution."

Dec. 9, 2009: Norton signs separation agreement.

Dec. 10, 2009: Board of Trustees meets. Agenda stated "Possible Management Personnel issue" could be discussed. The separation agreement, however, removes the issue from the agenda.

Dec. 11, 2009: Norton sends resignation letter to Carter.

Dec. 19, 2009: News report identifies Norton as a candidate for president at Youngstown State University. She does not get the job.

February 2010: Norton announces her resignation, citing "personal and professional reasons"

April 17, 2010: *Connecticut Mirror* provides first public account of story behind Norton's resignation.

SOURCES: Connecticut State University and *Connecticut Mirror*.

Efforts to reach the former president Thursday were unsuccessful.

In addition to concerns about Norton's ouster, faculty members have objected to the process by which her interim successor was chosen. The Faculty Senate had pushed for an internal person to take the post, hoping that someone familiar with the campus wouldn't take as long to come up to speed for what is by definition a temporary appointment. Instead, Carter selected Stanley Battle, former president of North Carolina A&T State University. Battle and Carter were colleagues at Eastern Connecticut State University, where Carter had previously served as president.

"We're going to put our best foot forward and work with him as best we can, but we're in an awkward position because the process of his appointment and our exclusion from that process has made us quite angry," said Johnson, the Senate president. "It looks like [Carter] just chose a friend."

Battle will be paid an annual salary of \$280,200, which means that Southern Connecticut will be paying out two presidential-level salaries -- Norton's and Battle's -- in the midst of a budget crunch.

"You're basically laying out an extra \$300,000 to have two presidents," Johnson said, "when you really only need one."

— Jack Stripling

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SETTLEMENT DEAL

Lawmakers Plan Hearings On SCSU President's Departure

By KATHLEEN MEGAN
 The Hartford Courant
 May 8, 2010

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With concern simmering over the apparent dismissal of Cheryl Norton as president of Southern Connecticut State University and with plans to keep both Norton and her interim successor on the payroll, legislators are planning investigative hearings late this month or early in June.

"I've been hearing rumbles, probably as early as December or January, from people connected with Southern who aren't happy about this," said Sen. Mary Ann Handley, D-Manchester, Senate chairwoman of the higher education committee. "I think all of us are very reluctant to interfere with personnel matters."

However, Handley said she is concerned about the extra cost of paying two salaries that, together, will total more than \$500,000, and about the circumstances of Norton's departure.

State Rep. Roberta Willis, D-Salisbury, House chairwoman of the higher education committee, said she is also concerned about the process by which interim President Stanley F. Battle, former president of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State

University, was hired.

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Critics of Connecticut State University System Chancellor David G. Carter and the CSUS board of trustees say they were dismayed when the trustees voted in October 2009 to allow the chancellor — with the approval of the president of the board of trustees — to dismiss the president of any of the system's four state universities. Before then, any such dismissal required a vote of the entire board.

Of the change in policy, Handley said, "It seems to be a very bizarre arrangement, and the delegation by the board of trustees of one of its most important responsibilities ... is troubling."

In a letter to Carter dated Dec. 11, 2009, Norton wrote of her intent to resign as president as of May 31, 2011.

However, according to documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, Carter had informed Norton in a Nov. 17, 2009, letter that her appointment as president would be "non-continued effective December 1, 2010."

A separation agreement dated Dec. 9, 2009, follows, in which Norton agrees to file "a letter of resignation for the purposes of retirement" by Friday, Dec. 11, 2009, and to "retire" from her position effective May 31, 2011.

The agreement also allows for Norton to be relieved of her active duties as of May 31, 2010, and to embark on a paid sabbatical at her annual salary — \$285,200 — through the next academic year and to retain her title as president. It also states that Norton's "evaluations at all times indicated that her performance in her position were satisfactory." Under the settlement, the parties have agreed not to comment publicly about it. For that reason, CSUS spokesman Bernard Kavalier said that neither Norton nor Carter could comment for this story. He also said Battle would not be available for comment until he assumes the interim presidency on June 1. Karl J. Krapek, president of the board of trustees, did not return phone calls.

Many faculty members at Southern believe Norton was forced out. "Why is someone who is voluntarily resigning being offered a hefty retirement package?" asked Brian Johnson, faculty senate president.

Battle, who was a colleague of Carter's years ago at Eastern Connecticut State University, will be paid \$280,200 during the same period. Battle shocked the North Carolina A&T community when he announced his resignation from the presidency in February 2009 after about 18 months on the job. He said he was resigning for family and personal reasons.

State Rep. Peter F. Villano, D-Hamden, whose constituents brought the matter to his attention, said a hearing probably will focus on why Norton's departure was handled the way it was, and also on money. "At a time when the state is in deficit, we're paying two people the same salary to run one institution?" Villano asked. "That obviously has a spot on the agenda."

Of the board's decision to empower the chancellor to dismiss a president with the approval of only the board's chairperson, Villano said he was surprised the panel would "put that much power in the hands of an individual. ... I thought that's what we had boards for — to make collective decisions."

In a Jan. 22 letter to Johnson, Krapek wrote that the decision to change the personnel policy on the dismissal of a president was made "for the noble purpose of protecting the privacy of a president in such a situation and to serve the mutual interests of both the individual employee [president] and the greater university as a whole."

CSUS officials also have noted that under the new policy, the board may, if desired, overturn "the non-continuation" at the next board meeting.

In his letter to Krapek, Johnson said the SCSU faculty had voted unanimously that "the policy unwisely and dangerously centralizes power in the Chancellor's office."

Johnson wrote that "Justice lives in transparency, and dies, sooner or later, in secrecy."

Of several board of trustees members contacted, the only one to comment was Andrew R. Wetmore, a student board member from Western Connecticut State University. Wetmore said he felt the leadership of the board "didn't really make the board fully aware" of the personnel policy change that would occur when the board voted in October to allow the chancellor to make dismissal decisions.

He further said he was told, as a board member, that Norton had resigned or retired on her own. He was not aware of the Nov. 17 letter written by Carter, informing Norton that her appointment would be "non-continued."

"Man, that's the first I've heard of that and I'm not thrilled," Wetmore said. He said he has complained of a lack of transparency on the board and plans to make that complaint again at the next board meeting.

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BY COLIN MCENROE

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Get Carter

By Colin McEnroe on May 8, 2010 1:18 PM | Permalink | Comments (7) | SHARE

The story of the dismissal of the SCSU president has been bothering me for a week or so now, and today's developments are even more appalling.

I don't feel especially sorry for Cheryl Norton. She will apparently receive \$285,000 during the next academic year to do nothing. After the last few years in this country, I can assure you that a high percentage of Americans would take that deal.

I feel sorry for us. We will pay \$565,000 to staff that position in the next academic year, because the new person is getting \$280,000.

The new development in the story is the evidence that state university chancellor David Carter appears to have misled at least some of his board members about his own actions. He appears to have fired this woman and then created a paper trail that looked like a resignation. A lot of boards would fire you outright for doing that.

It's unlikely that this board will. This is the board that was trying to pay Carter, who makes around \$400,000 per annum, an extra \$82,500 as a retention bonus.

If you are, like me, a Connecticut person who leans left of center, and you would like the Jeckyllian experience of temporarily transforming yourself into a [Chris Powell](#) conservative for a few hours, play around with [CTSunlight.org](#) for a while.

Some high salaries make more sense than others.

(My views are further tintured by the knowledge that the single worst encounter I have ever had with a medical professional, the only truly arrogant, indifferent, incompetent delivery of medical services I have ever seen in my life, came from a doctor who makes over \$800,000 as a state employee.)

But my overall, untutored opinion is -- and I'd love to know what others think -- that a full analysis of state salaries and pensions over the last 20 years would reveal a tilt or drift which has left the state somewhat understaffed at the lower paid front line positions and overstaffed at highly -- sometimes absurdly -- compensated managerial positions.

I don't think either political party has shown any honesty or commitment about this. Each side seems content and eager, when the chance arrives, to stuff more politically connected people into those kinds of jobs.

Carter's behavior is unconscionable. If he can't arrange for the presidency of Southern to cost less than \$565,000 next year, he's a lousy administrator. If he wasn't above-board in carving out this deal, that's a huge problem.

But I don't think his cavalier attitude toward compensation is an isolated phenomenon in state government. The gubernatorial candidate who persuades me he's really going to take this on has a good chance of getting my vote.

7 Comments

By Richard on May 8, 2010 3:41 PM

State government in CT is one of the few perfect Rube Goldberg inspired mousetrap games for your tax dollars. Pennies on your tax dollar get returned in actual goods and services to the public.

You've hit one of my favorite topics: state employees and the unions and the appointees.

What was true when I graduated college has reversed. Civil servants used to be lower paid workers with decent benefits back in the era when private unions and cradle-to-grave jobs were still a reality.

After Reagan's crushing of the air controllers union there has been a slow but sure erosion of unions and benefits in the private sector and a strange counter strengthening in the public sector in both benefits and salaries. The abuses at the top are the most obvious but the tricks with OT pay in the last few years of employment and other manipulations are getting more and more noticed.

Every agency has version of the 'somewhat understaffed at the lower paid front line positions' stories. During a layoff the junior worker bees are the first to go based on seniority.

To really get the gist of this at a lower level one has to examine the inner workings of the Rube Goldberg machine.

In some agencies they actually have departments that make money based on their licensing, inspection and enforcement actions and should be self-sufficient.

During the last 10 years many of these money-making departments lost money because they laid off the workers bees which means their inspection and enforcement and licensing functions were no longer active so they stopped charging the fees.

They kept the middle managers to retain the 'culture' and the reporting personnel (the reports always have to be filed!) and upper management (someone has to account for the money that gets spent on middle management and reporting functions).

In reality they have enough personnel to do the job but they are slotted by union job function in the wrong positions based on seniority. If it was a private business it would be profitable even under the worst economic conditions. As a state business it's rarely profitable for more than a couple years at a time then the knife comes and it runs as a pure loss for 10 years after as fees become 'optional' due to departmental 'non-performance' of its job proper job functions (a strict reading of the legislation would say they can't collect fees if they aren't doing their job, etc. so they waive the revenue, file their reports, and sit around waiting for early-retirement packages).

By Artie A... on [May 9, 2010 2:11 AM](#)

Maybe Corrupticut should just turn into a huge reality show. This could solve all the financial woes.

All of Hollywood's writers and producers could not come close to creating the natural talent we have right here. We would not even need expensive tryouts like American Idol. Here they just pop out of the wood work every week. We are blessed with a never ending source. With what we see every day in the political circles and the headlines about state officials, it is obvious to me now why Jerry Springer moved his production to Corrupticut. He was smart enough to get here first!

That's right he beat out the reality shows and will now beat out Maury Povich not to be confused with Jim Vicovich. This programing upgrade will feature many of Corrupticut's finest who still have many of their original teeth. Stay tuned folks it may be the last hurrah for your almighty tax dollar.

By mick on [May 9, 2010 11:02 PM](#)

What you report is sickening and more obscene waste of our tax dollars. Of course, I'm in the minority (I guess) of those who think paying UConn basketball coaches millions is also a huge waste of our money. I think it says something about our society that we're willing to waste that kind of money on sports and then balance our budgets by closing schools. Pretty short-sighted.

By Bill Mainer on [May 10, 2010 9:32 AM](#)

This is shameful. I am afraid that the more people dig into what Carter is and has been up to, more problems will come to light. The good news for him is that Relf's approval rating is back up and that's all she cares about so she'll go back to sleep. Whomever Carter reports to in addition to Relf, probably have their own problems to hide (for example - the legislature).

By Richard on [May 10, 2010 4:01 PM](#)

Perhaps it is worth noting, just to get a sense of proportion, that this unnecessary extra \$300,000 would pay for some 60 classes taught by PhD adjuncts (paid some \$5000 apiece.) and for which some 1700 students will be charged some \$1,700,000.

By Lynne on [May 10, 2010 8:06 PM](#)

I was brought up on the premise that, if you got a good education, worked hard, played fair & honest you had a good future ahead of you. Nothing could be further from the truth in what this country had become today.

Today, Iranian-born kids who have dual citizenship are allowed the luxury of an American college education that is paid for by the Iranian govt. PLUS they get a living allowance.

Meanwhile, US born citizens who pursue an advanced education in their own country are slapped with a bill upwards of \$20,000+ annually (depending on the school they choose to attend) plus expenses - then when they graduate they are saddled with thousands in student loan paybacks, and they can't find a job. Meanwhile, these "educators" are following the pattern set by corporate CEOs in this country: lie, cheat and steal, ruin the organization you are supposed to be guiding, and skate out with millions in compensation packages. What a country!

By Marjorie VT on May 12, 2010 8:26 PM

Carter fired Dr. Norton (and took the CSU Board, hook line and sinker!!) to hire his old crony Battle - No stranger to scandal!!

http://www.news-record.com/content/2009/02/24/article/the_curious_case_of_stanley_f_battle

Can't believe the CSU Board will actually remove a University President that is so effective and well-liked and replace her with such a controversial figure - Not at a time when things are headed the right direction at SCSU!

Especially at the cost of over a half a MILLION DOLLARS of tax-payer money. Who is this Carter to throw away so much, hurt so many??

PLEASE keep the public aware of this situation as it continues to develop, and thank you for covering it.

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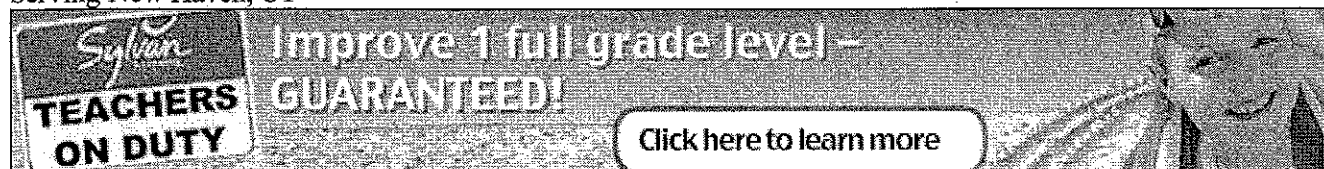
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Opinion

Ouster suggests 'incompetence,' 'cronyism' ?

Published: Tuesday, May 11, 2010

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I was so pleased to read the editorial about Southern Connecticut State University and its president, Cheryl J. Norton.

My wife and I have been senior citizen students at SCSU for more than 20 years. I have been leading the Senior Citizen Student Organization as an elected volunteer for a long enough time to know a good deal about how the school functions. I have been on a number of search committees, have read many resumes and have helped choose people for positions of authority at the university.

Having read about Stanley F. Battle's background and experiences, I think the board of trustees should have considered his previous record before approving his appointment as the interim president.

"Incompetence" is the word that comes to me to describe the actions of the board, which abrogated its responsibility to the university by allowing the chancellor to hire and fire presidents of the university system at his discretion.

"Cronyism" is the word that best describes the actions of Chancellor David G. Carter, who chose Battle.

As for all the money wasted, ask any department head how difficult it is to hire more professors to fill the needs of an expanding student population.

I know Norton quite well and think she has done her job very competently as president.

Reader Comments

The following are comments from the readers. In no way do they represent the view of nhregister.com.

SCSU alum wrote on May 11, 2010 9:18 AM:

"I sincerely hope the Legislature will follow through with a public hearing to thoroughly investigate this situation.

The Connecticut State University System is tax-supported and has a huge impact on the state. It is not the personal fiefdom of the Chancellor, with high-paying, significant positions to be dispensed and withdrawn on his personal whim. The Chancellor should be required to state, publicly and under oath, exactly why he acted as he did. Not only do his actions reek of cronyism, it's impossible not to wonder whether sexism -- and/or racism --

played a role when he, a male who is black, decided to replace SCSU's first female president, who is white, with a friend of his -- a male, who is black.

All the members of the Board, too, should be required to testify. Other than matters of major policy, such as setting tuition levels, the hiring and firing of university presidents has to be one of their few other major responsibilities. Their vote to hand this over to the Chancellor seems to be a huge abrogation of their responsibility, verging on malfeasance in office. Were they aware that Chancellor Carter would immediately use this power to fire President Norton? How do they rate Carter's overall performance as chancellor? How did they rate President Norton's performance?

The Board also must be asked about their additional vote to require that anyone selected as acting president in the system must have previous experience heading a university -- thus ruling out anyone already familiar with the university in question, requiring no 'learning curve,' and best able to steer the university through the period in which a new president is selected. Here, in particular, is where the accusations of cronyism creep in. Were they aware of the questions surrounding the abrupt departure Interim President Battle's abrupt departure from his last position? Will Battle be a candidate to replace Norton permanently? Were they witting accomplices to the chancellor in this affair, or unwitting dupes? (Either answer would not seem to do them credit.)

In particular, Karl J. Krapek, chairman of the board of trustees of the state university system, should be required to explain his statement that the Board handed over to the Chancellor the power to fire a president without explanation "for the noble purpose of protecting the privacy of a president in such a situation." If, as seems extremely unlikely, President Norton was fired for cause, the state's taxpayers deserve to know what that was. Otherwise, Krapek's comment skates terribly close to slander, and President Norton deserves an apology -- and reinstatement.

If she'd have us after this shabby treatment. "

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TAXPAYER wrote on May 16, 2010 11:12 AM:

" MAYBE THEY ALL SHOULD BE INVESTIGATED WITH THE CHANCELLOR AND DR. BATTLES STARTING WITH THE H.R.DEPT AT S.C.S.U. AND LOOK INTO THE CORRUPT AND GUSTAPO TACTICS BEING SHOVED DOWN EVERYONE'S THROAT, THEN ONTO ALL THE PHONY ADMINISTRTOR'S AND THEIR SALARIES DRIVING UP THE COST OF EDUCATION IN CONNECTICUT. "

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SCSU Insider wrote on May 24, 2010 1:11 PM:

" Word has it that Dr. Battle may be planning on staying as President after his interim appointment. "

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CSUS Chief David Carter Squanders State Funds

DAVID CARTER • State university chancellor joins the 'it's only money' crowd



Cheryl Norton, president of Southern Connecticut State University since 2004, will be replaced as of June 1 at the behest of David G. Carter, chancellor of the Connecticut State University System.

May 14, 2010

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For another maddening example of excessive public spending, consider Connecticut State University System Chancellor David G. Carter's handling of the change in command at a campus in New Haven.

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Mr. Carter wanted Cheryl Norton out as president of Southern Connecticut State University, to be replaced June 1 by interim President Stanley F. Battle. He is the former head of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. Messrs. Carter and Battle had been colleagues some years ago at Eastern Connecticut State University.

But Mr. Carter, whose annual salary is about \$400,000, could not execute a clean break with Ms. Norton, who apparently was doing a good job, according to her evaluations. So she will have a year's no-show, no-work position paying \$285,200, courtesy of Connecticut taxpayers.

She will continue to carry the title "president" during her sabbatical swan song, although Mr. Battle will actually run SCSU as interim president during the next academic year and be paid \$280,200 for the period.

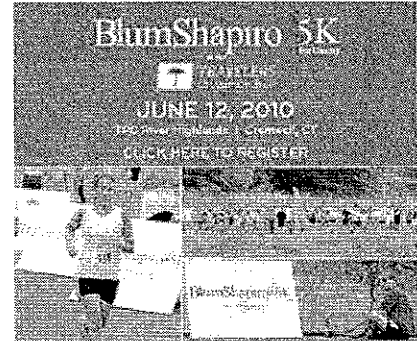
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This is an excess the state can't afford. SCSU should not be paying double for presidents at a time when the state is going deep into debt to balance next year's budget and faces a \$3 billion-plus deficit the following fiscal year. The state's universities are scrambling for every dime they can find.

This expensive mess appears to be Mr. Carter's fault. He sought and received permission from his trustees in October to dismiss the president of any of the system's four state universities with the approval only of the president of the board of trustees.

According to documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, Mr. Carter informed Ms. Norton in November 2009 that her appointment as president would be "non-continued." A separation agreement was signed in December in which she agreed to retire from her position effective May 31, 2011.

Whatever the circumstances of her departure, one university president for the price of two is a bad deal.



Some officials with influence over the public purse have so much money at their disposal that they forget its value. The Democrats who control the legislature borrow as if there's no tomorrow and seem to be afraid to cut spending. Gov. M. Jodi Rell talks a good fiscal restraint game but makes sure there's money in the budget for patronage judgeships the state doesn't need.

Mr. Carter is another of many who run up the bill.

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



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ekstopford at 12:35 PM May 23, 2010

Not the first time Carter has squandered state taxpayer's money. This is not about whether Dr. Norton did or did not do a good job. It is about Carter repaying old favors. He is above all else a politician, and a very slick one at that. Don't let his humble pie story fool you for one minute, and don't underestimate him either. He has spent many years positioning himself for where he is today, he has trampled over not a few good people in the process, and he would do anything to stay there and bask in the limelight and collect his big, fat salary.

marjonlevy at 10:03 PM May 16, 2010

It's becoming painfully clear that Carter fired Dr. Norton (and took the CSU Board, hook line and sinker!!) to hire his old friend Battle - No stranger to scandal!!

http://www.news-record.com/content/2009/02/24/article/the_curious_case_of_stanley_f_battle

At this point I believe the CSU Board will finally have to listen to their constituents (EVERY SINGLE tax-paying CITIZEN of our State?) and retain Dr. Norton. No one in their right mind can justify removing a University President that is so effective and well-liked - replacing her with such a "controversial" figure - Not at a time when things are headed the right direction at SCSU, and when the State is in such dire financial distress... at the cost of over a half a MILLION DOLLARS ? Outrageous!

rickybobb at 8:23 PM May 15, 2010

Sounds like the "Good Ole Boys" club is active again.

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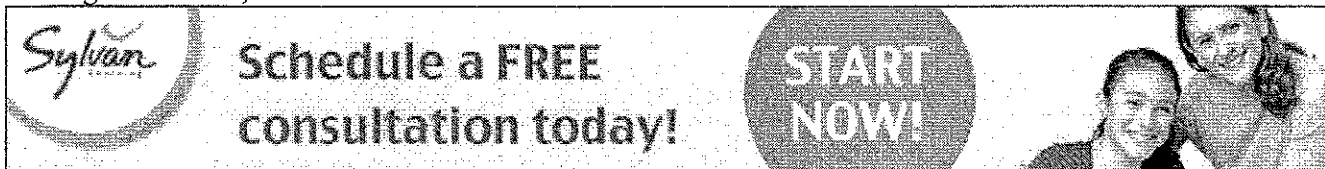
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News

Trustee slams state university policy

Published: Friday, May 14, 2010

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By Mary E. O'Leary, Register Topice Editor
moleary@nhregister.com

NEW BRITAIN — Andrew Wetmore, who is resigning from the trustees board for the state university system, had just one important piece of business to take care of Thursday before he left.

Wetmore, 22, vacated his place at the trustee's table, and came around to address them when students and faculty were invited to speak.

He told the members that a policy change that puts the decision to terminate the four university presidents for "no cause" in the hands of the chancellor and the board chairman was "an embarrassment" that should be rectified.

Wetmore, the student representative from Western Connecticut State University, said he felt misled when the new policy was described by Chairman Karl Krapek as a "minor HR (human resource) change" before the trustees were asked to ratify it in the fall.

Wetmore and trustee Gayle Williams broke ranks publically with the trustees by both agreeing at the meeting that the board should revisit the policy.

"I feel it was an embarrassing error by the entire board. We did not give it the public debate it deserved. It is a very dangerous job precedent for the entire system," Wetmore recounted Thursday evening when reached at his home.

Wetmore apologized that he and his colleagues did not do the necessary "due diligence" to vet the policy. He is resigning because he was just elected president of the student government at Western and felt it was a conflict.

The policy change, which was formulated in October, ended with the firing of Southern Connecticut State University President Cheryl Norton by Chancellor David Carter, with only the consent of trustee Krapek.

Others have said it was then run past the six-member executive committee, but the majority of the 18-member board was in the dark.

Carter sent her a termination notice on Nov. 17 and Norton signed a separation agreement Dec. 9, a day before the board could have addressed it if it was clear about the firing. Wetmore said the members were only told that Norton had submitted her resignation to pursue other interests.

Wetmore and Williams, who was also reached at home, said they did not realize the details of the firing until recent press reports. "I had no idea. We weren't involved," Williams said.

She would like a public discussion of the policy, but its placement on the agenda is up to Krapek. "He is an open and honest and a fair man. I have total confidence in Chairman Krapek," Williams said.

The state legislature is also weighing in and plans to have a hearing, probably in early June. "I would encourage the legislature to do so. Clearly the board was left out of some very important decisions," Wetmore said.

State Sen. Mary Handley, D-Manchester, said the trustees "in a sense resigned from their responsibilities. It's an interesting way to run a railroad."

Contact Mary E. O'Leary at 203-789-5731.

Reader Comments

The following are comments from the readers. In no way do they represent the view of nhregister.com.

Cynic wrote on May 14, 2010 9:00 AM:

" Part of a recent pattern in this country of concentrating power in the hands of a few.

We approach totalitarianism slowly, one step at a time. "

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BS again wrote on May 14, 2010 11:53 AM:

" Mary Handley: Instead of saying it's an interesting way of running a railroad, why not do something about it. What a stupid comment. "

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maddynapp wrote on May 14, 2010 12:56 PM:

" It is a very sad state of affairs when we, the residents of CT, allow a democratic system that was in place for decades to change and be run like a dictatorship. I did not realize we left the USA!

In all seriousness how can we allow one person to make the decisions regarding the presidents of the CSU system without the BOT as a whole voting in such a measure as has been done in the past.

I do believe that the tiers within the BOT and their roles have been reversed. The Chancellor has a position at the will of the BOT and is supposed to report to the BOT and they are the legal body that oversees his actions and is in place to keep personal biases out of the equations when hiring or firing personnel and other matters. Instead Carter has managed to "CONTROL" the BOT where they report to him and no Carter reporting to the BOT.

Nowhere in the real world would this be allowed to happen. How can we as CT residents sit back and allow this to happen now? We live in a country that honors and upholds democracy. The behaviors stated above are anything but democratic! Please bring back democracy and transparency to the CSU system and BOT. I truly believe this would only be accomplished by the REMOVAL of Carter and Krapek. "

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Emily wrote on May 14, 2010 4:55 PM:

" It's interesting that the trustees admitted to not having done their work. If you attend any board meeting, you

will quickly discover that none of them do the work - but for a handful. And that handful calls all the shots. It really is a sorry group of trustees, and Carter has now exposed them. The governor should clean house. "

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CT Bill wrote on May 14, 2010 8:43 PM:

" Everyone is freaking out over the process.

But will someone with knowledge please explain WHY she was fired? What had she done, or failed to do? What's the real story behind all of this? Ms. O'Leary?M "

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ckaren wrote on May 23, 2010 2:07 PM:

" I'm sure the BOT never saw the report I gave Carter about security risks and mismanagement in his organization right after he fired me. Yet they never questioned why 2 security officers were fired just as they began to try to implement BOT policy. Wake up! Carter has been abusing his authority since he stepped on board. "

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May 14, 2010

After 6 years, an awkward exit for Norton

By Jacqueline Rahe

It was the last meeting of the school year for the Connecticut State University System's Board of Trustees, and farewells were in order.

There was the valediction to the student members of the board, given praise by the board's chairman, a plaque thanking them for their service, a handshake and a chance to speak, followed by applause from about 100 attendees.

And there was the brief and awkward goodbye to Southern Connecticut State University president Cheryl Norton.

Reading in a monotone from a sheet of paper, Chancellor David G. Carter spent 15 seconds on his send-off for Norton, who has served as president at the university in New Haven for almost six years.

"I wish to express my appreciation to President Norton for her many contributions to Southern Connecticut State University during her tenure as president," he said. "I wish her the very best as she embarks on her sabbatical leave."



Norton, Carter part ways (Jacqueline Rahe)

Following his remarks he did not look at her, nor did the two speak before or after her last Board of Trustees meeting Thursday.

Within seconds of the meeting being gaveled closed, Norton was headed for the exit, leaving behind a room full of stunned colleagues and her leather notebook with the SCSU emblem filled with her business cards and other job-related materials.

Norton leaves Southern at the end of this month, having been dismissed by Carter in November.

Both Norton and Carter were mum on the events surrounding her departure.

"I cannot talk about it," Norton said.

"I will not talk about it," Carter said.

Despite Norton's February announcement that she was stepping down "for personal and professional reasons," and an official description of her departure as a "retirement," The Connecticut Mirror disclosed last month that Norton actually had been dismissed by Carter in a Nov. 17 letter. Lawyers later negotiated a separation agreement.

The agreement states that Norton's departure "is not related in any way to her work performance or for disciplinary reasons," but give no other reason. As part of the agreement, Norton and CSU officials agreed not to comment on the separation.

But that didn't stop nearly a dozen professors and the student board member from Western Connecticut State University from speaking against the way her departure was handled during a public forum following Thursday's meeting.

"The presidents will end up thinking that they have to stay under the grips of the chancellor in order to retain their job," said Steve Larocco, an English professor at Southern, adding that that Norton's dismissal "consolidates power to the chancellor."

Larocco was referring to Carter's dismissal of Norton under a new policy that had been adopted by the executive committee of the CSU trustees just eight weeks earlier. The new policy allows a chancellor, with approval of the trustees' chairman, to dismiss a president without cause. Previously, approval by the entire 18-member board was required.

Complaints about Norton's dismissal continued after the meeting.

"It was a hush job. She didn't need to be fired. She was a good president. I have not been able to find anyone who would have agreed she needed to be fired," Will Hochman, an English professor at Southern, told a group of professors talking after the meeting.

They agreed with him.

Brian Johnson, president of Southern's Faculty Senate, said he is "tired of being side-stepped" by the board in his request for a review of the policy.

"No one really knows what happened. Let them bring the policy to the light of the full board. We've been seeking transparency and dialogue and we've been rebuffed every step of the way," he said.

Johnson said he is "clueless" to why Norton was fired, since "all the measures of how our university is doing have been great."

The group of critics may have spurred one trustee to act, as Gail Williams voiced her concern with the policy following the public forum and asked that the full board review the new policy's merits.

There is no guarantee the item will be placed on a future board of trustees agenda, but it is on the agenda of state lawmakers. Members of the Higher Education Committee to promise a [full investigation](#) in the coming month. Neither Carter nor Norton would say whether they will testify, but Sen. [Mary Ann Handley](#), D-Manchester, said as co-chairwoman of the committee she has the power to subpoena them to testify. Whether she plans to go that far remains to be determined, she said.

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Comments

Submitted by jonpelto on Fri, 05/14/2010 - 8:59am.

Having worked with Senator Kevin Sullivan on the legislation to expand and enhance the Connecticut State University System I can assure you that David Carter's actions are exactly the opposite of what the Legislature intended when it developed the law pertaining to the powers of the Chancellor. CSU is a great university but this type of abuse of power is more than unsettling, it is, I believe a violation of both the spirit and the letter of Connecticut law.

Submitted by James D on Fri, 05/14/2010 - 11:52am.

For what specific (actual) reasons was she pushed out? What did she do, or fail to do? Everyone's focusing on the process, which makes sense, but what's the cause here?

Submitted by larry williams on Fri, 05/14/2010 - 1:03pm.

Carter should be fired, and board rules concerning termination of unit presidents should be restored to require a vote of the full board.

Submitted by maddynapp on Fri, 05/14/2010 - 9:29pm.

It is a very sad state of affairs when we, the residents of CT, allow a democratic system that was in place for decades to change and be run like a dictatorship. I did not realize we left the USA!

In all seriousness how can we allow one person to make the decisions regarding the presidents of the CSU system without the BOT as a whole voting in such a measure as has been done in the past.

I do believe that the tiers within the BOT and their roles have been reversed. The Chancellor has a position at the will of the BOT and is supposed to report to the BOT and they are the legal body that oversees his actions and is in place to keep personal biases out of the equations when hiring or firing personnel and other matters. Instead Carter has managed to "CONTROL" the BOT where they report to him and no Carter reporting to the BOT.

Nowhere in the real world would this be allowed to happen. How can we as CT residents sit back and allow this to happen now? We live in a country that honors and upholds democracy. The behaviors stated above are anything but democratic! Please bring back democracy and transparency to the CSU system and BOT. I truly believe this would only be accomplished by

the REMOVAL of Carter and Krapek.

Submitted by Mikey S. on Fri, 05/14/2010 - 10:38pm.

Shaking up Southern is exactly what is needed. Norton had six years to change the culture there and she failed. Check the DHE figures -- 13% four graduation rate for full-time students. Remember the Channel 3 report in poor control of equipment - Southern loses where more than the other three CSU schools combined. They have had IT breaches, cost over runs on construction jobs and money stolen by someone in their Bursar's Office. Read the State Audit reports for even more stuff. I am glad Carter had the guts to make a change. Maybe it is the Southern faculty that are afraid that a new president might actually hold them accountable. I am glad that CSU now has a Board that will hold their presidents feet to the fire. Contrary to what Pelto says, CSU is not a great University system. It has the potential to be a great system. Getting rid of poor presidents even if it cost you a few hundred grand is worth it in the long run.

Submitted by Larry Williams on Sun, 05/16/2010 - 5:02pm.

Then the board of trustees should have fired her.

Submitted by Mikey S. on Mon, 05/17/2010 - 5:33am.

If the facts are what they are, explain why it matters. If the Board really has a problem with Carter over this matter, then they can fire him. The Chancellor has no influence over who gets appointed to the Trustees so there is an independence oversight of the Chancellor. I really think the Southern faculty are afraid of getting a kick-butt President that will shake them out of their dysfunctional world. Someone that will hold them accountable. Southern should be the lead school in CSU rather than its embarrassment. After six years of President Norton, your four year graduation rate is still only 13%. I can't believe people are upset about firing someone with that record. CT government needs a few more firings to shake the place up. Taking away someone's job is not going to be pleasant but forcing students to attend a school without inspiring leadership is worse.

Submitted by Elsie R on Mon, 05/17/2010 - 5:15pm.

Hmm, let's see, an expensive settlement for SCSU's first female president, who turned around a faltering institution; the placement of a male buddy in her stead; the strategic leak of the letter that triggered the dispute that was settled - a leak that was intended to damage her future prospects. Anyone else think Civil Rights may not apply to women in the CSU System? Anyone else think the letter leak is a late hit in a longstanding game of sex discrimination and harassment? Where is the state's civil rights division - or Obama's for that matter? Norton's agreement can only release claims up to the date she signed it. She should pursue this and expose CSUS and its Chancellor for what they are.

Submitted by Mikey S. on Mon, 05/17/2010 - 7:39pm.

Turned around a faltering campus???? Your whole argument falls apart there. The statistics (go to DHE web site) do not show a turnaround. Connecticut state government (including the CSU System) needs to more aggressively terminate poor performing employees. Whether it is a clerk at DMV or a President of a college. For too long the leaders have not had the guts to terminate those basically stealing a paycheck. I am sure Norton tried and she is probably a decent person but she has not been able to change the culture at Southern. It is an underachieving school. How many more years do you give a president to turn it around.

Submitted by Elsie R on Mon, 05/17/2010 - 9:40pm.

Oh, and while she's at it Norton should sue Mikey S. for libel among other things. Any takers for my bet that Mikey's really the chancellor or his buddy (both are really inspiring leaders, don't you agree)?

Submitted by ckstopford on Wed, 05/19/2010 - 10:46am.

I believe that when an investigation is launched, you will find more than you bargained for. Anyone who dares question Carter, or raises issues regarding his management team or adherence to state regulations is going to be sent out in the coal bin - he will make sure of that. I was the second security officer to be summarily fired by Carter after pushing for a risk assessment and asking for improvements in the rather bleak security picture there. Carter will bring the system down if he is allowed to continue to silence all who dare question him.

Submitted by ckstopford on Wed, 05/19/2010 - 10:50am.

Having for a brief time been a security officer under Carter, I can unequivocally state that he has no interest in the spirit of state legislation. I was fired after pushing for an assessment of security risk - heaven forbid I turn up issues! I was told more than once that, as a special executive branch of state government, the System Office was not obligated to comply with mandates that every other state agency must follow. Arrogance!

Submitted by ckstopford on Wed, 05/19/2010 - 10:54am.

As the former Security Officer for CSUS under Carter, I can state from personal experience that Dr. Norton was eager to have a risk assessment performed on her IT security and had taken steps to put it in the works. However, I was severely chastised by Carter and his direct reports for speaking with Dr Norton and was further expressly forbidden from doing a risk assessment - and was shortly thereafter summarily fired myself. Please be careful about making assumptions - the whole story of CSUS has barely begun to appear in the light of public scrutiny.

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May 14, 2010

Presidential Retirement or Dismissal? No One's Saying at Southern Connecticut State U.

By Andrea Fuller

Cheryl J. Norton, president of Southern Connecticut State University, will step down at the end of this month. But while the university says that she is retiring, *The Connecticut Mirror*, a local newspaper, reports that she has been dismissed.

Ms. Norton, the university's first female president, announced her retirement in February, with plans to work on reform of elementary and secondary education. But *The Connecticut Mirror* revealed that David G. Carter, the Connecticut State University system's chancellor, had dismissed Ms. Norton in a letter dated November 17.

The reasons for Ms. Norton's dismissal remain unclear. A separation agreement obtained by the *Mirror* says that her dismissal "is not related in any way to her work performance or for disciplinary reasons."

A policy change adopted by the system's Board of Trustees last October allows Mr. Carter to dismiss campus presidents without the approval of the board and "without cause or explanation." Some faculty members have said the new policy puts too much power in one person's hands, the *Mirror* reports.

Ms. Norton and Mr. Carter have declined to talk about the circumstances of her departure.

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The Chronicle of Higher Education 1255 Twenty-Third St, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20037

May 21, 2010

SCSU Foundation board members resign over Norton dismissal

By Robert A. Fraham

Two directors of Southern Connecticut State University's private fund-raising arm have resigned in protest over circumstances surrounding the dismissal of Southern President Cheryl Norton, a foundation official has confirmed.

In a sharply-worded resignation letter, director Robert S. Frew accused Connecticut State University System Chancellor David G. Carter, who removed Norton, of "micromanaging" the system's four campuses, and charged him and the CSU board of trustees with "arrogance and incompetence."

"It was such a secret process," said Frew, a former SCSU computer science professor who stepped down after six years on the board of directors of the SCSU Foundation.

Another board member, Carlton Highsmith, could not be reached for comment Friday, but the foundation's executive director, Megan Rock, said his resignation also was in connection with Norton's dismissal. Highsmith is retired vice chairman of SPG Paperworks Corp.

The foundation's volunteer board includes 25 elected members, Rock said.

The reasons for Norton's dismissal have never been made public, but the matter is the subject of an informational forum in Hartford Wednesday by the legislature's Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee. At the 1 p.m. forum at the Legislative Office Building, lawmakers also plan to ask about a policy allowing the university chancellor to dismiss presidents without a vote of the system's Board of Trustees.

Only weeks after that policy was adopted last fall, Carter notified Norton that she would be dismissed. The chancellor oversees four CSU campuses, including Southern's campus in New Haven.

In a letter to the foundation board, Frew said, "I am deeply disturbed with the behavior of Chancellor Carter in removing Cheryl as our president," he wrote. "In my opinion she has changed, for the better, the character and motivation of Faculty, Staff, and Students."

Some faculty members had urged Carter to choose someone from Southern as an interim replacement for Norton, but Carter instead selected Stanley Battle, former president of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. Battle and Carter were colleagues at Eastern Connecticut State University when Carter was Eastern's president in the 1990s.

The CSU system announced Norton's departure as a "retirement," but documents obtained by The Mirror indicated that Norton, 61, had been forced out and had negotiated a settlement with the CSU system.

Under terms of her settlement, Norton will be on paid leave beginning June 1. She will retain the title of president and remain on the university's payroll for a year at her annual salary of \$285,200. During that time, the university also will pay Battle an annual salary of \$280,200.

In his letter, Frew said he hoped both Carter and the CSU Board of Trustees would be removed from office.

"We now have a Chancellor who is acting as a Super President, micromanaging the affairs of the campuses. . . . In this time of financial crisis we cannot afford this arrogance and incompetence," Frew wrote.

Carter, through a university spokesman, declined to comment.
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•An attorney general who forgot he never went to Vietnam.

•A prospective attorney general who thinks being a rock star with a law degree is the same as being a lawyer.

•A mayor who received \$40,000 or more in home improvements for free, in exchange for providing city business to the contractor.

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•The head of the Connecticut State University System, making \$400,000, is paying two people nearly \$300,000 each to be president of Southern Connecticut State University, while towns face cutbacks to school programs and/or higher property taxes.

Is it any wonder there is growing frustration, cynicism and outrage among voters who feel helpless and taken advantage of, while the price of food, gas, heating oil and other basics keep rising?

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And I haven't even mentioned Sen. Chris Dodd.

No result in the November elections will surprise me. No incumbent is safe. There is nothing more dangerous than people with no hope. And they will be heard from.

Dave Nagle, East Hartford

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Comments (3)

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razonadguy14 at 10:02 AM May 24, 2010
good work on the new log-in security, Trib Corp.

The Old Hartford at 9:26 PM May 21, 2010
Lets hope they stay awake at least until November.

SeniorDaddy at 11:55 AM May 21, 2010
People are beginning to wake up...finally.

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May 25, 2010

SCSU faculty: 'No confidence' vote on Carter, Krapek

By Robert A. Frahm

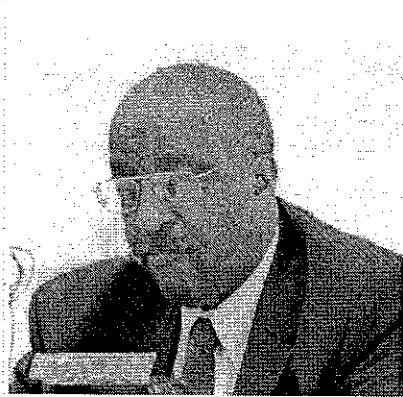
Faculty members at Southern Connecticut State University issued a vote of "no confidence" in the university system's chancellor and Board of Trustees chairman Monday, accusing them of reckless financial behavior and poor judgment.

In a letter to Gov. M. Jodi Rell, the SCSU Faculty Senate asked for a state investigation into actions by CSU Chancellor David G. Carter and board Chairman Karl Krapek, including the recent dismissal of Southern President Cheryl Norton.

• Rick Green: Carter's pay "exploded" since 2006

Their actions "have harmed and embarrassed the CSU system and the State of Connecticut," the faculty members said.

The letter was made public two days before state lawmakers have scheduled an informational hearing on the circumstances surrounding Norton's dismissal.



Chancellor David Carter

Norton's departure was announced in February as a retirement, but documents obtained by The Mirror indicated that Norton, 61, had been forced out and had negotiated a settlement with the CSU system.

In its letter, Southern's Faculty Senate criticized an arrangement that keeps Norton on the CSU payroll at her full \$285,200 salary for a year after she relinquishes her duties while also paying her interim replacement a salary of \$280,200.

The extra cost, the faculty said, is enough to pay "34 one-year, full tuition-and-fees scholarships for underprivileged Connecticut students," the faculty said.

A separation agreement between CSU and Norton does not disclose the reasons for her dismissal except to say it "is not related in any way to her work performance or for disciplinary reasons." Carter later named Stanley Battle, former president of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, as an interim replacement. Battle and Carter were colleagues at Eastern Connecticut State University when Carter was Eastern's president in the 1990s.

As chancellor, Carter oversees four CSU campuses, including Southern's campus in New Haven.

Carter notified Norton of her dismissal only weeks after the Board of Trustees adopted a policy granting him authority to dismiss presidents "without cause or explanation" and without a vote of the full board.

That type of authority is uncommon in most other states, according to a report issued last week by the state Office of Legislative Research. Most states require board approval to dismiss a president, and only four of 35 university systems reviewed had similar policies, the report said.

The new policy, which requires only that the chancellor get the consent of the board chairman, "not only dramatically increases the Chancellor's role in firing, but puts a premium on secrecy at the expense of transparency," Southern's faculty Senate said in its letter.

Norton's dismissal stirred controversy at Southern and prompted two members of the SCSU Foundation board, the university's private fund-raising arm, to resign.

In their letter, the faculty also alludes to the CSU board's decision last fall to authorize an \$82,500 retention bonus over three years to reward Carter for his decision not to take an early retirement offer from the state. Carter turned down the first installment of the bonus, due this year, and Krapek said future installments are subject to a review of the state's financial condition.

Nevertheless, the board, "under Mr. Krapek, had no hesitation in offering it," the faculty said.

Carter and Krapek have "exhibited recklessness in their financial decision-making and poor judgment in their policy-making. We've repeatedly questioned this pattern of behavior - to no

avail," said a letter to Rell from Brian Johnson, president of Southern's Faculty Senate.

A spokesman for Rell said the governor had not yet reviewed the letter. Carter and Krapek declined comment.

Carter is among several officials who have been asked to appear before the legislature's Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee at an informational forum at 1 p.m. Wednesday in Hartford.

Carter is reported to have asked the state to pay for a private attorney to accompany him to Wednesday's forum. The attorney general's office confirmed the request was received, but said it was denied. "As a general practice, our office does not provide or pay for counsel for state officials testifying before committees of the legislature," the office said in an emailed statement.

Johnson also is expected to appear before the committee, as are state Higher Education Commissioner Michael Meotti and CSU Trustees John Sholtis and Gail Williams. Krapek also was invited to appear but told the committee he had a prior commitment out of the state, said a press spokesman for Sen. [Mary Ann Handley](#), D-Manchester, the committee's co-chairman. Please login or register to post comments

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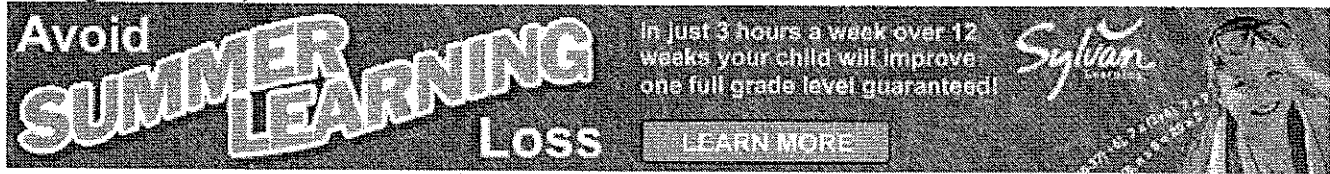
Comments

Submitted by Luke22 on Tue, 05/25/2010 - 9:16am.

There needs to be a house-cleaning at CSU. Why not just eliminate the System Office and save money? Under Carter's reign, there has been one calamity after another -- from questionable relations between a staffer and a legislator to retention bonuses to secret firings to runaway costs. Does the governor or anyone have the backbone, the integrity, to take on these issues? Looking at the state's record since the Rowland administration, I would say "no."

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SCSU faculty appeals to Rell on leaders, policies (document)

Published: Tuesday, May 25, 2010

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By Mary E. O'Leary, Register Topics Editor
moleary@newhavenregister.com

NEW HAVEN — Faculty members at Southern Connecticut State University have written to Gov. M. Jodi Rell saying that they have “lost confidence” in the leadership of the chancellor and the chairman of the state’s four-university system board of trustees.

The letter accuses both men of reckless financial decisions and poor policy concerning personnel.

An informational forum will be held Wednesday in Hartford on a controversial policy change by the Connecticut State University system that gives Chancellor David Carter the power to fire a university president without cause and without a hearing, as long as he has the consent of board of trustees Chairman Karl Krapek.

The trustees have a one-time opportunity to reverse the decision, but the firing of Southern President Cheryl Norton had not been made clear to the majority of the board, according to several board members. Carter terminated Norton Nov. 17, and she had signed a separation agreement Dec. 9, a day before the trustees’ meeting.

The policy change has generated criticism from state legislators that the trustees have relinquished their responsibilities. The letter to Rell is signed by Brian Johnson, president of the Faculty Senate at Southern, who also criticizes the two men for “reckless” financial decisions.

The agreement with Norton lets her do research for a year at her full salary of \$285,200, plus expenses, while the university system will pay William Battle \$280,200 to be the acting president, starting in June.

Johnson said the additional expenditure could support 34 one-year scholarships for underprivileged students. He said the first instance of bad financial decision-making was offering Carter a retention bonus of \$82,500, paid out over three years, for not taking a state employee buyout.

The chancellor, who is paid around \$400,000 annually, and last year got a longevity bonus of \$24,049, declined the retention bonus for 2010-11.

Bernard Kavalear, spokesman for the CSU system, when asked for a response, said: “We’re declining comment on that.”

The governor's office said it had not yet received the letter.

A report by the state's Office of Legislative Research said the noncontinuation policy, which did not require the approval of the full board, was uncommon in university systems. Out of 35 universities, it found four that had policies similar to the one at CSUS.

It found that the University of Nevada system allows the chancellor, in consultation with the board chairman, to remove the president, but it must be for cause and the president has the right of appeal.

Johnson said the university Senates at all four CSU campuses, plus the CSUAAUP Executive Committee, have passed resolutions asking that this personnel policy be rescinded.

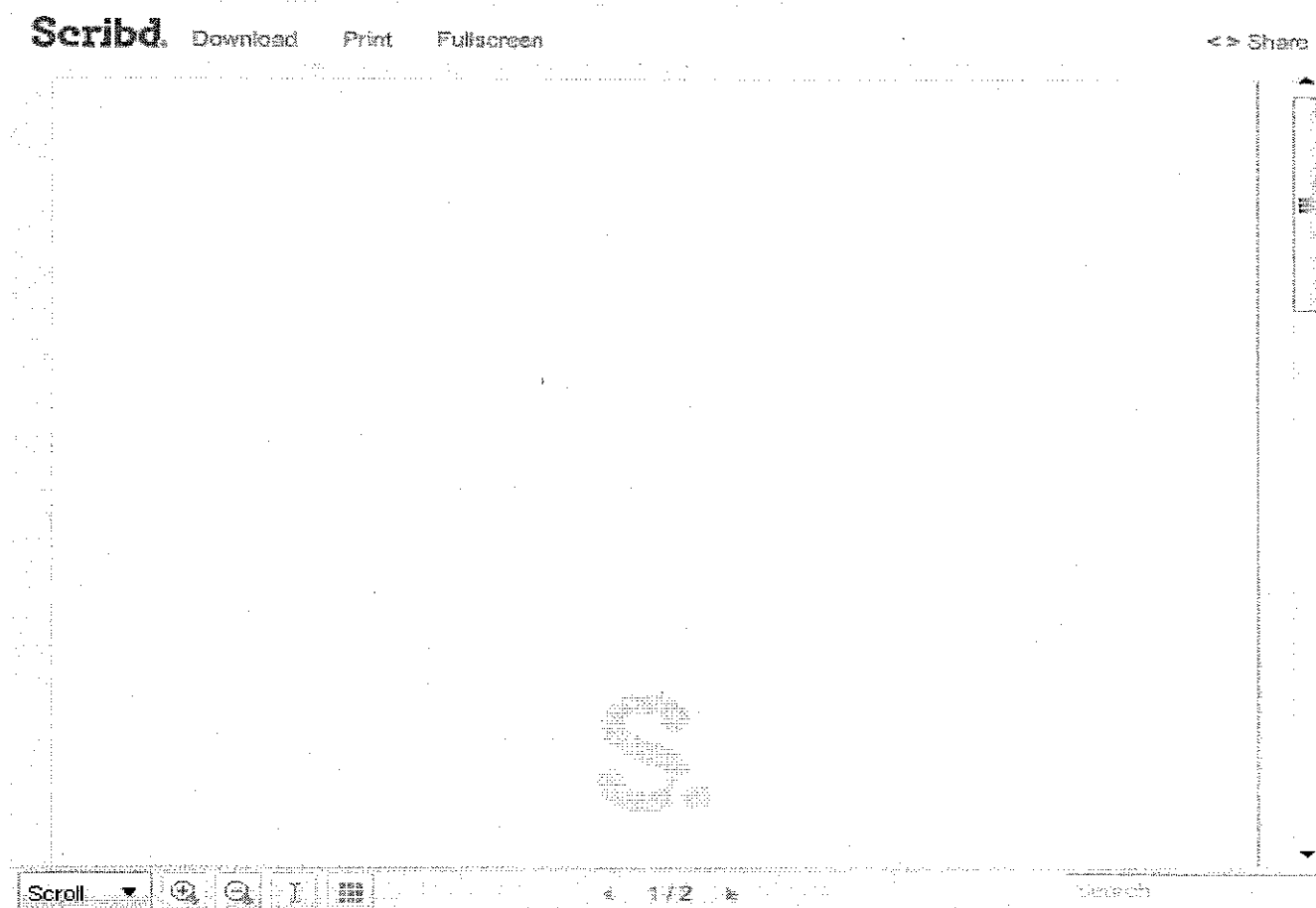
In his letter, Johnson said the new policy "puts a premium on secrecy at the expense of transparency," and it will diminish the university's ability to "retain independent-minded presidents" when they can be let go with three months' notice.

Johnson complained to Rell that letters to Carter and Krapek have been answered with "one- or two-sentence assertions that they are acting within their authority." He said there is "virtually no oversight from within the CSU system or from any external office."

The Faculty Senate president told Rell that their actions have embarrassed the system and "stand in contrast to your ethics-driven leadership." With the key role higher education will play in revitalizing the economy, Johnson wrote "nothinglessthanhonorable,open, and judicious leadership should be tolerated and expected."

The information forum before the Higher Education Committee of the legislature takes place at 1 p.m. in Room 1E of the Legislative Office Building.

Letter to Gov Rell



Reader Comments

The following are comments from the readers. In no way do they represent the view of nhregister.com.

Disgraceful wrote on May 25, 2010 6:33 AM:

" The governor should remove David Carter and Karl Krapek for cause. The hubris of these two men and their pissing away of our tax dollars is inexcuseable. They don't return phone calls. They hide behind secretaries and gatekeepers. They're "sleeping for dollars" campaign that cost state taxpayers another billion in debt and endless and unaffordable increases in tuition and fees is just a partial list. The faculty is not the only group of people who have lost confidence in Carter, the taxpayers have. "

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Emily wrote on May 25, 2010 9:07 AM:

" There needs to be a house-cleaning at CSU. Why not just eliminate the System Office and save money? Under Carter's reign, there has been one calamity after another -- from questionable relations between a staffer and a legislator to retention bonuses to secret firings to runaway costs. Does the governor or anyone have the backbone, the integrity, to take on these issues? Looking at the state's record since the Rowland administration, I would say "no."

As for the CSU spokesman's lame comment, he was probably too busy with his politics. "

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Matthew Joseff wrote on May 25, 2010 9:57 AM:

" How can a system as valuable as education function properly if no one has confidence in it? Sounds like it

needs an overhaul. "

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Billbo wrote on May 25, 2010 10:13 AM:

" Doesn't anyone remember the scandal that the Doctorate in Ed program had? It was someone at the top of the CSU system, at the time, who allowed the program to be run by a very unscrupulous, unqualified professor. He had recieved tenure status in a seemingly suspicious manner despite not having a limited publishing or teaching resume. "

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Anita wrote on May 25, 2010 3:11 PM:

" It needs to be stated that the letter from the letter from the senate president does not reflect the feelings of ALL SCSU faculty members. Business as usual needs to change at SCSU. Some Faculty members support the actions of the Chancellor and the BOT. "

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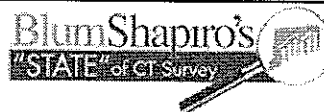
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State University Presidents Receive Hefty Raises

Rick Green

Rick Green
12:40 p.m. EDT, May 25, 2010

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It seems as if David G. Carter, chancellor of the Connecticut State University system, works for an arrogant Wall Street bank instead of the taxpayers, parents and students.

Since taking over in 2006, Carter's salary has exploded by nearly 47 percent, to \$362,733. During the five years that his predecessor had the job, William Cibes' salary grew by about 21 percent. When Carter took the job in 2006, he was paid \$247,505.

If you wonder why the cost of college seems unrelated to what is happening in the rest of the world, Carter and the system's board of trustees are one reason.

The presidents of the four state university campuses all have received hefty raises under Carter's tenure, with salaries rising to \$285,200, an increase of nearly 24 percent since 2006.

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At the same time, students and their parents have been asked to pay increased tuition, even as programs are curtailed and faculty members face freezes in their own pay.

I wanted to ask Carter or Board of Trustees Chairman Karl Krapek about all this, but the chancellor's office did not respond to my request for an interview. Bernard Kavaler, assistant vice chancellor for public affairs, declined to comment about the salary growth.

From 2006 to 2009, tuition at the four state university campuses grew by about 21 percent. The salary for an assistant professor during roughly the same period grew by 10 percent – not bad, really, but a far cry from Carter's princely compensation.

Most distressingly, this comes at a time when public education needs our support more than ever. Carter's salary-grab will send the opposite message to state legislators who must figure out how to overcome a projected \$3 billion deficit next year.

Let's also not make the argument that we need to hand out these absurd raises to retain top talent or to keep up with other universities that overpay their leaders. We are in still in a crippling recession and parents can't afford tuition increases.

In one of two notable examples, the departing University of Connecticut president accepted a retention bonus. Yet Michael Hogan, shameless to the end, still jumped ship to the University of Illinois. And the one state university system president who did leave, Cheryl Norton of Southern Connecticut State University, was forced out this spring by Carter in a power-play shrouded in secrecy until exposed recently by former colleague, Robert Frahm of the Connecticut Mirror.

The state will be paying Norton's salary for the next year — as well as that of her hand-picked replacement, Stanley Battle, who worked with Carter at Eastern Connecticut State University.

Battle's \$280,200 salary, by the way, would cover the cost of approximately 34 students' tuition-and-fees for a school year, I'm told.

Norton's bogus "resignation" and other financial adventures in the chancellor's office will be the subject of a hearing by the General Assembly's Higher Education Committee Wednesday afternoon at 1 at the capitol.

"What I am concerned about is the fact that tuition is going up and we are seeing at the same time rather large salaries compared to other places. We need to investigate that," state

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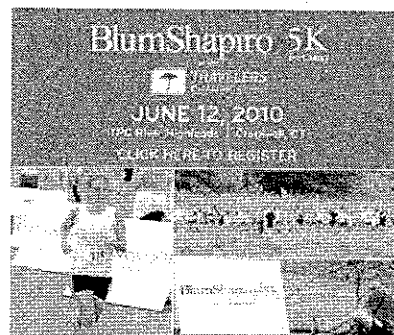
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Connecticut State University System Chancellor David G. Carter's Salary: Up, up and away!

2006: \$247,505**2007: \$311,857****2008: \$362,733****2009: \$362,733**

Carter also receives \$24,000 in "longevity payments" based on his years as a state employee. The chancellor's job also includes a \$25,000 fund that Carter can dip into to pay for tickets, donations and other events, which brings his total compensation to \$411,733.

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